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FIRST THINGS

THE IRONY OF AMERICAN POWER
Andrew J. Bacevich

THE WAYS WE WORSHIP
Avery Dulles

THE BLIND PROGRAMMER
Edward T. Oakes

Jonathan Carson on **GALILEO REDUX**

Michael Linton on **MUSIC OF THE SPIRIT**

ALSO: Critical Realignments · James Nuechterlein on Book Reviewing · Robert Benne · Preston Jones · Mark R. Talbot James T. Burtchaell · Laura L. Garcia · David Novak

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Richard John Neuhaus
The Public Square
A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

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FIRST THINGS

MARCH 1998 • Number 81

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Richard John Neuhaus
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FIRST THINGS

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Marian Mischief?

I am flattered that Richard John Neuhaus has commented not once but twice (While We're At It, November and December 1997) on my *Newsweek* cover story on the Virgin Mary. In that story we reported the international petition campaign, signed by millions of Roman Catholics, asking Pope John Paul II to define as dogma the Marian titles of Co-Redemptrix, Advocate, and Mediatrix of all Graces. And well Father Neuhaus should comment since the story was both newsworthy and ecumenically important, as the more than four hundred letters *Newsweek* received attest. But of all the letter-writers and commentators, only Fr. Neuhaus managed so thorough a misreading of the story.

In his first commentary, Fr. Neuhaus called the story "mischief"; in the second it was a "scare." The latter comment was especially dubious since he was merely calling his readers' attention to a comment in a one-man right-wing newsletter, *catholic eye*, which has a circulation somewhat shorter than my parish prayer chain. When Fr. Neuhaus is wrong, it seems no voice is too weak if it amplifies his error.

Essentially, Fr. Neuhaus' error is of his own manufacture. He claims that *Newsweek* reported that a papal definition of the new dogma was "imminent." Nowhere in my article is that word used, nor is the notion implied. I did speculate that the end of the millennium, 1999, would be a likely time for such a dogmatic statement, as part of the Church's jubilee celebration of the new Christian millennium. That is not "imminent" as most people would understand the word.

So why the idiosyncratic fuss? The only reason I can see is that Fr. Neuhaus is worried about the effect such a papal definition would have on his evangelical readers and subscribers, who count on him to know what's up in the Catholic Church, and especially on Bill Bright and other evangelical spokesmen whom Neuhaus has been courting for his religious version of Common Cause.

Were I a courted evangelical leader, I'd be wary of Fr. Neuhaus' glib assurances that the Pope has no intention of proclaiming the dogma. Why?

First, no one at the Vatican has publicly said he won't. The firmest statement from that quarter is this single sentence faxed to *Newsweek*, in reply to my query, by Dr. Joaquin Navarro-Valls, director of the Holy See Press Office and received after the *Newsweek* article was published: "There is no study underway *at this moment in time* by the Holy Father Pope John Paul II or the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on the subject of the possibility of a papal definition on this theme" (emphasis added).

I note two things: that Navarro-Valls was careful not to suggest that such a study is out of question for this pontificate, and that he did not respond to my full question, which asked whether the Pope, the CDF, or any other organ of the Holy See had undertaken such a study. The Vatican lives by loopholes and for very sound reasons: who can say what might happen tomorrow and, besides, there are more than forty cardinals, including some high officials of the Roman Curia, who have signed the petitions to the Pope in support of the papal definition. Indeed, articles pro and con the proposal continue to be published in Rome, as a careful reading of *L'Osservatore Romano* shows, indicating that the issue is very much alive. Dr. Navarro-Valls quite rightly did not commit himself to more than he could honestly say, which is what a good press officer should do.

It appears that Fr. Neuhaus and I agree that a papal definition would be a very bad idea. I trust he would further agree that the best evidence that a papal definition is not under study is that, as I have since been able to learn, neither the papal Biblical Commission nor the International Theological Commission has been asked to study the matter. But note, these commissions do not make

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papal requests to them public, nor is the Pope required to sound them out.

Were I an ecumenical evangelical who looks to Fr. Neuhaus for my information about the Vatican, I'd have lots of questions. I'd want to know why—if, as Fr. Neuhaus claims, there is no chance this Pope will define the dogma—John Paul II hasn't done what any good Supreme Pastor would do: namely, tell the good (if misguided) Marifocal Catholics who continue to rain down petitions on the Vatican at the rate of four thousand a month that as far as he is concerned the action they are asking for isn't going to happen, at least not on his watch. I'd wonder what kind of church organization it is that can't respond to the faithful but prefers, rather, to keep them guessing.

Again, were I an evangelical courted by Fr. Neuhaus, I'd want to know what assurance in canon law there is that this Pope, who has used the Co-Redemptrix language himself on more than one occasion, will not decide—say, next Tuesday—that the Holy Spirit has moved him to define the dogma. I realize that Fr. Neuhaus has friends high at court at Rome (and not all of them are named Ratzinger), but I'd wonder about relying on one American priest's palsiness with the powers that be, and about an ecclesiastical system that can't respond to a well-intentioned request. In fact, I'd wonder how such a large and zealous (Marian) subculture in the Catholic Church has gone unnoticed and unremarked upon by such a well-informed journal as First Things. But then Fr. Neuhaus' game is commentary and opinion—reaction, not reporting. Which is why we have magazines like *Newsweek*.

Finally, I'd wonder why Fr. Neuhaus bothers to reprint such a silly argument as put forward by *catholic eye*. Newman is definitely *not* one of this Pope's theological enthusiasms. Further, petitions to the Vatican *have* figured in previous Marian dogmas, such as the Assumption, and the idea of Mary as co-redeemer has been around since the Middle Ages. The problem with quoting the *catholic eye* man is that he doesn't know his own tradition well.

So until the Pope deigns to respond to the petition, concerned evangelicals have every reason to be wary of Fr. Neuhaus' personal assurances. They should note that after the Marian battles of Vatican Council II, Paul VI unilaterally (as was his prerogative) went ahead and proclaimed (non-infallibly) Mary as Mother of the Church. John Paul II is a different kind of Pope, one who has great confidence in his own theological outlook and formulations, as well as a very high view of Mary and her role in the economy of salvation. On this issue, which John Paul will have the last word? The one who heeds the Mariological reticence of the council fathers, or the one who has not hesitated to invoke her as co-redeemer? Concerned and courted evangelicals should stay tuned. And Fr. Neuhaus might consider doing what New Testament scholar Raymond Brown and others have done: namely, thank *Newsweek* for doing the Church—and evangelicals as well—a service.

Kenneth L. Woodward
Religion Editor
Newsweek
New York, NY

RJN replies:

Ignoring the personal digs, I address a few items in Mr. Woodward's continued mischief-making: 1) The end of 1999 sounds "imminent" to me. 2) The quest for unity among Christians is not comparable to Common Cause. 3) The sundry causes espoused within a world of a billion Catholics produce innumerable requests for the Pope to do all sorts of things. It is not customary, prudent, or possible for him to announce what he is *not* going to do. 4) Mr. Woodward claims to know "what any good Supreme Pastor would do," implying that John Paul II is a bad pastor because he does not tell those who exercise their freedom to petition to go fly a kite. 5) The only thing that was "very much alive" for a while in

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Rome was irritation with *Newsweek*'s sensationalist story. 6) In response to the *Newsweek* escapade, *L'Osservatore Romano* ran articles strongly discouraging the idea of a new definition, and none in favor of it. 7) Mr. Woodward is right that the title of Co-Redemptrix has been around for centuries, as have many other Marian titles in popular devotions. Campaigns for new dogmatic definitions are also nothing new, although *Newsweek*'s exploitation of this one as news is perhaps novel. 8) As an informed Catholic, Mr. Woodward must know that, contrary to the alarums raised in his article, the Second Vatican Council, notably *Lumen Gentium*, makes emphatically clear that devotion to Mary is entirely subordinate to the worship of Christ, "the one mediator between God and men" (1 Timothy 2:5). The suggestion that the Pope is not wholeheartedly devoted to the teaching of the Council is nothing more than a gratuitous slur. 9) As for Cardinal Newman, this pontificate has treated as authoritative his argument regarding the development of doctrine, as witness the 1990 instruction *The Ecclesial Vocation of the Theologian*, explicitly approved by the Pope. 10) To suggest that John Paul II might act on a whim — "say, next Tuesday" — to infallibly define a new dogma is simply, and contemptibly, frivolous. 11) The idea that the Holy See is obliged to respond to a "well-intentioned request" in a manner that satisfies Mr. Woodward's curiosity betrays an amusing self-importance not uncommon to his profession. But enough. I have known Ken Woodward for many years and have had occasion to take favorable notice of his work in these pages. It is not worthy of him that in this instance he desperately attempts to defend his mischief-making with further mischief.

Evolution and Faith

Skeptics of evolution will find Stephen M. Barr's "Untangling Evolution" (December 1997) disappointing, for he appears to adopt the usual agenda of the theistic evolutionists, namely, untangling evolution from theological objections. The real untangling that needs to be accomplished consists in separating pseudoscience, the "blind watchmaker thesis" of evolution, from genuine or falsifiable science.

Professor Barr admits that "historically evolution has been harmful to religious faith," contributing to "undermining confidence in Scripture and promoting a naturalistic view of man." The moral of this story for the Church ought to be: Don't play with fire, i.e., evolution, lest we get burnt badly as we have been burnt badly in the past. Father Brian Harrison relates a relevant anecdote ("Bomb Shelter Theology," *Living Tradition*, May 1994):

> During the days of the worker-priest movement in France after World War II, one of its leaders, the Abbé Michonneau, reported that he had had to revise one of his presuppositions when confronted with social reality. The movement started largely under the influence of a fashionable left-leaning theology. The workers have become alienated from Christianity mainly because they see the Church as standing on the side of capitalist exploiters, right? Wrong. Michonneau found, when talking to *real* workers, that a much more common reason given for unbelief was the conviction that modern science had demolished the Book of Genesis.

Prof. Barr says that "if we can set aside the historical effect of the theory of evolution" we will find that evolution "raises questions for faith, but not difficulties." But we cannot set aside the historical effect. We live not in a Platonic realm of abstract intellectual ideas, but in a real world unfolding in history, where ideas have consequences and some ideas, like evolution, have devastating consequences. The loss of the French workers is a *difficulty* for the Church, not a mere question for faith. . . .

The danger of the blind watchmaker thesis is that it destroys the *necessity* of God. And if the necessity of God disappears, God is reduced to a subjective projection of prescientific minds. What Prof. Barr fails to appreciate is that evolution and creation are mutually exclusive theories about the *necessary being*. In Richard Dawkins' blind watchmaker thesis the necessary being is mutation and natural selection. Dawkins assures us that this blind watchmaker has made God superfluous, and that Darwin has made it possible for us to be intellectually fulfilled atheists.

On the other hand, if God is real, there is no *necessity* for a blind watchmaker mechanism. If we can explain the complexification of the universe by invoking an Intelligent Designer, the evolution story is redundant. The stakes in the naturalism vs. theism debate are higher than Prof. Barr seems to realize. As the case of the French workers reminds us, when people become convinced that the necessary being in the universe is a blind watchmaker mechanism of evolution, the Church is soon confronted with a death of God movement accompanied by widespread apostasy from the Faith.

(The Rev.) David R. Becker
Saint Mary's Catholic Church
Shade Gap, PA

Stephen M. Barr's "Untangling Evolution" struck a particularly responsive chord, probably because I am, like him, a physicist. This is one of the rare essays in which I could find nothing to disagree with. I should like to suggest possible answers to Dr. Barr's enigma of dragon-fly copulation. Firstly, as a scientist I have long thought of God as a master experimenter trying out various ideas in evolution. Secondly, when contemplating such oddities as the platypus, echidna, armadillo, and many fossil reptiles, I see examples of God's sense of humor.

Robert C. Tompkins
Towson, MD

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Stephen M. Barr replies:
I think that if Father Becker were to take another look at my article he would find answered there many of the points he raises in his letter. I thank Mr. Tompkins for his letter.

Catholic Contrition

As a Catholic psychologist, I share the concerns of Mary Ann Glendon in her article "Contrition in the Age of Spin Control" (November 1997). I emphatically agree that Pope John Paul II's gracious expression of sorrow for errors made by members of the Catholic Church may provide enemies of the Church with ammunition for attack. . . . I also share Ms. Glendon's apprehensions about Catholics, ex-Catholics, and many writers, reporters, and owners of the news media who will abuse their power over public opinion by presenting biased reports about the Catholic Church and its members. . . .

Nevertheless, as a scientist/practitioner with a specific interest in conflict management, I believe that the Pope's declarations of regret can be most beneficial for the Church in the long run. . . .

In psychotherapy, if people don't examine their mistakes, or if they deny making any errors, they "stay stuck in the problem." All the research and practice literature on conflict resolution emphasizes dialogue, mutual understanding, acknowledgment of the merits of the position of one's adversary, admission of one's own mistakes, efforts to make amends, willingness to compromise, reciprocal behavior, planning, and follow-up. This is, I believe, a very good model to follow as well in dealing with the danger described in Ms. Glendon's article. . . .

I was delighted to read Ms. Glendon's quote from Flannery O'Connor, who wrote in the 1950s in response to the detractors of the Church: "What you actually seem to demand is that the Church put the kingdom of heaven on earth right here now." Well, we all would like a magic wand to abolish all the inequities, fallibilities, and frustrations of this all too imperfect world.

It is obvious to me, and I believe to Ms. Glendon, and hopefully to many others as well, that of all the flawed institutions in this world, the Church and other religious groups have come closest to achieving this exalted goal of a just and caring structure. . . .

I believe the Pope is taking a healthy risk by his actions. Because the public forums are often dominated by people with anti-Catholic tendencies, articulate enemies of the Church will definitely be heard by many people. Lucid arguments by Catholics will probably be received less favorably by the popular media. One of the answers to this disappointing state of affairs is political, social, economic, and intellectual activism. Energetic and courageous speech and behavior have had long traditions in Catholicism. Journals like First Things provide a useful forum and support network for those of us who would like religion to have a stronger impact on public life. . . .

Eleanor Cole
New York, NY

In regard to "Contrition in the Age of Spin Control": Who would have thought that one short article could contain so much irony!

A man of courage and strong convictions, Pope John Paul II is no stranger to slurs, slams, and misunderstandings from the media and even his own people. In the past, no matter how controversial the issue, his staunchest supporters stood by his side, cheered him on and valiantly beat off any attacks that might come his way. Suddenly, and quite inexplicably, these same supporters seem to be cowering in fear, whimpering about the anxiety they're experiencing over the possible negative fallout that might result from Pope John Paul II's "plan for a premillennial public expression of sorrow."

Decrying this whole notion of public contrition, Mary Ann Glendon quotes her friend from Boston who facetiously commented, "It's getting to be tough times for the dead." In point of fact, however, he was citing one of the traditional tenets of our faith. Yes, the Church remains mindful of the sinfulness of her members even after death. Designated as a time for the final purification of our souls, Purgatory is meant to be "tough times." Moreover, if Ms. Glendon's friend is genuinely concerned about the souls of the departed, he might be interested to know that he can help alleviate their suffering through personal acts of penance, prayer, and almsgiving.

With smug self-righteousness, Ms. Glendon then directs her anger towards those women of our Church who have refused to accept all of the Pope's teachings as outlined in his *Apostolic Letter to Women*. Apparently, she is in a complete state of denial about her own opposition to the Pope. Yes, she pays some obligatory lip service to the Pope's teachings in *Tertio Millenio Adveniente*, but it is patently clear that she believes not a word of it.

While the Pope would beseech us to understand that "acknowledging the weaknesses of the past is an act of honesty and courage which helps to strengthen our faith," Ms. Glendon feels compelled to remind us that there are "persons for whom no apology will ever be enough," and that "expressions of sorrow over past shortcomings do not require abasing ourselves before others, and certainly not before persons who are unwilling to admit any misdeeds of their own."

Beneath these irrational, mean-spirited, and racist remarks lies yet another irony. Ms. Glendon seems to find it impossible to forgive people who refuse to accept apologies, yet she expects others to find it ever so easy to forgive people whom they feel bear some responsibility for the loss of their loved ones.

Perhaps the most offensive irony of all is the one concerning "collective guilt." Although primarily rooted in the sin of envy, anti-Semitism has also been fueled throughout the centuries by our Church's past teaching on the collective guilt of the Jews for the death of Jesus. With callous disregard for facts or feelings, Ms. Glendon

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exhorts her readers to "join with our sisters and brothers of other faiths to resist all those who peddle the poison of collective guilt."

There is nothing intrinsically evil about collective guilt. In fact—when self-imposed, following a careful examination of the collective conscience—collective guilt can be a very uplifting and edifying means of spiritual growth for the entire community. Collective guilt becomes "poisonous" only when it is imposed on one group by another and then used to justify the hatred and destruction of that group.

Finally, in its instructions relating to the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that "Penance requires the sinner to endure all things willingly; be contrite of heart, confess with the lips, and practice complete humility and fruitful satisfaction." How proud we should be that our Holy Father has the courage and integrity to remain faithful to this great tradition. What a beautiful way to give glory to God and make holy the Mystical Body of Christ.

Polly Goldberg
West Lafayette, IN

Mary Ann Glendon replies:

Many thanks to Dr. Cole for illuminating the problem of "contrition in the age of spin control" with her insights from the field of psychology. Thanks, too, to Ms. Goldberg for a letter that illustrates the problem to which my article was addressed. Alas, a person who does not balk at ascribing collective guilt is not apt to flinch at misrepresenting an argument or hurling intemperate epithets. Dr. Cole understood me correctly: the Pope has adopted a wise and humane course, and it is chiefly up to us laypeople to prevent his statements from being misused by persons who will never be satisfied until Catholics apologize for their very existence.

Thanks for the Memories

Thanks to FIRST THINGS and to Andy Bacevich for his reflections on our high school experience in the early sixties ("Memories of a Catholic Boyhood," December 1997). We were fortunate to catch a Benedictine education at just the right moment, in the years before and during Vatican II. The postwar generation that had crowded into religious life possessed a remarkable blend of talent, self-confidence, and dedication. We rode the crest of the wave. Too many years earlier, and the education they provided might have been insufferably parochial; not long afterwards, it had moved much closer to the American secondary school norm. As it was, we benefited from the best that Benedictine tradition could provide, before the dilution and experimentation of the next two decades had set in. . . .

Michael J. Hollerich
(St. Bede Academy, '65)
St. Paul, MN

When Pastors Were Pastors

Thanks to James Nuechterlein for his essay on "Pastoral Concerns" (December 1997). We have come a long way with respect to the pastoral office since I attended a midwestern Lutheran college. The college was located in a town overwhelmingly Lutheran. The single Lutheran church dominated the social fabric of the entire community. The pastor, a German immigrant, was never accused of doubting his pastoral authority. In the 1950s the college enrolled its first black student. When the townspeople caught wind of this, elders of the church called a special meeting to determine whether that student would be able to receive Communion in their church. It was, of course, understood that the Eucharist was an absolutely essential element of Lutheran life, but these leaders no doubt wished for some way the student might go to a larger city where there were congregations for black Lutherans. After considerable discussion, all pointing to not admitting the student, the congregation was ready to vote.

Then the pastor got up to speak. He simply stated that if this black student could not receive Communion in the church, there would be no more Communion for anyone since they would all be going to hell anyway. That was that. No vote. The student came to church and Communion. Life went back to normal for the town and the college.

John R. Hannah
Bronx, NY

Smoke and Substance

I would like to thank Joop Koopman for his generally positive review of my book, *The Smoke of Satan: Conservative and Traditionalist Dissent in Contemporary American Catholicism,* which appeared in the December 1997 issue. I must confess, however, that Mr. Koopman caught me a bit off guard. In previous reviews by conservative Catholics, I have been denounced as a quisling and an idolater, my intellectual integrity has been called into question, and, best of all, I've been accused of trying to argue that conservative Catholics are somehow satanic. (What else, after all, could my book's title possibly mean?)

In a refreshing departure, Mr. Koopman refrains from attacking my moral character. But still intent on hurting my feelings, he attacks my writing instead: "The surfeit of detail in Cuneo's descriptions of characters and movements, a good bit of it not terribly compelling and rather repetitive, threatens to deter all but the most diehard readers." Here is a swipe that I didn't anticipate. To this point, reviewers in the secular media, and even my harshest critics in the Catholic media, have agreed that *The Smoke of Satan* is nothing if not entertaining. I wonder which descriptive details in particular Mr. Koopman has in mind. The photograph of Jimmy Durante prominently displayed in the reception room of a traditionalist monastery in New Jersey? The Janis Joplin song played on a jukebox by a leading proponent of the Cardinal-Siri-as-real-Pope-in-exile conspiracy theory? The prison love letters composed by Pope Gregory XVII of the Infinite Love community? Or could it be those fifty blue-and-white-habited nuns of the Mount St.

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Michael's community in Spokane? It may well be the case that none of this is compelling. But repetitive?

Descriptive detail aside, Mr. Koopman's main complaint with *The Smoke of Satan* is that it short-changes James Hitchcock ("a man of genuine substance") and his wife Helen Hull Hitchcock by paying undue attention to Catholics of a decidedly more exotic stripe. I quite agree that James Hitchcock is a man of substance; and in a longer or differently focused book, I would have enjoyed treating him at greater length. The same can also be said of the talented polemicist E. Michael Jones, pro-life activists Monica Migliorino Miller and John Cavanaugh-O'Keefe, and a dozen other individuals who make little more than cameo appearances in *The Smoke of Satan.* What disturbs me, however, is Mr. Koopman's cavalier dismissal of so many of the other individuals and groups that *Smoke* takes trouble to discuss. How does he know that they are merely "eccentric" or merely of "fleeting interest"? As the history of religion amply attests, today's fringe player might very well turn out to be tomorrow's prophet, today's dead-end sect tomorrow's religio-political juggernaut. This doesn't mean that I'm personally placing any bets on the various separatist and apocalyptic groups that are dealt with in *The Smoke of Satan.* I am, however, open to being surprised.

So, what to make of all this? Less descriptive detail? Heavier on the Hitchcocks and lighter on the extremists? I think I get it. Mr. Koopman is the former editor of the *National Catholic Register,* and he appears to have wanted me to write a book that the *National Catholic Register* would have been proud of. I wrote *The Smoke of Satan* instead.

Michael W. Cuneo
Fordham University
Bronx, NY

Joop Koopman replies:

It seems highly unlikely that any of the members of the extreme Catholic right described in Michael Cuneo's book—indeed, it is hard to speak of the majority as actual members of the Church—would actually end up as "tomorrow's prophets" or be harbingers of "tomorrow's religio-political juggernaut." Their views and paranoias are simply too far gone. What I meant to say in arguing that the catalogue of bizarre characters ends up being "repetitive" is this: There are lots of bizarre (and amusing) details and twists and turns to the personalities and their papal conspiracy theories, etc., but there is little or no genuine substance to be found in most of the groups, which end up blurring together.

As to Professor Cuneo's conclusion that I would have preferred a more pro-Hitchcock, et al., approach, that is not the case. It is just that there is more to individuals like Hitchock, more substance that is worth analyzing and reading about, whether or not you agree with the man's basic outlook.

Delusions About the Environment?

Richard John Neuhaus' "Christ and Creation's Longing" (December 1997) asserts that environmentalists (they're all clearly radical "counter-culturists") need to grow up and "develop an environmental theology and piety that is coherent, comprehensive, compelling, and true to the revelation of God in Christ." It can easily be inferred from the polemics of this diatribe that someone who cares about animals and trees doesn't care about humans (they're anti-anthropocentric, even). Father Neuhaus further suggests that rather than work together, we should do some intellectual exploration "within a community and tradition that provide necessary correctives by reference to the rule of faith and teaching authority." We may infer that the environment will take care of itself once the "people problem" has been solved. Of course, there may be a short wait until this occurs.

This article leads me to better understand how Baruch Spinoza must have felt while bombarded with epithets by virtually everyone for daring to think that there was some relationship between God and nature. Fortunately, those who think like the deluded Fr. Neuhaus are becoming rarer. . . .

Henry Schultz
Santa Clarita, CA

A Monopoly in the Public Square?

Richard John Neuhaus is disturbed that Christianity does not enjoy a monopoly in the public square ("Gridlock in the Public Square," December 1997). He apparently believes that non-Christian religions should not merely accept minority status, they should be invisible as well.

If the choice non-Christians face is between a naked public square and one in which the only voice heard is a Christian one, is it any wonder that so many, particularly Jews, prefer the former over the latter?

Howard A. Gootkin
New York, NY

RJN replies:

It is a tribute, of sorts, either to Mr. Gootkin or to my writing, that he takes me to be saying precisely the opposite of what I intended to say. The point of the author of the piece on Christmas in the public square, and of my comment on his piece, is that it might be helpful to remember that Christmas is a Christian thing. It is certainly of interest to ask why some, including some Jews, find that suggestion offensive.

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This Time

Passing in Review

James Nuechterlein

In this month's While We're At It, RJN makes passing reference to Christopher Caldwell's astute article in the *Weekly Standard* on book reviewing practices at the *New York Times Book Review* ("The Reviewers Reviewed: Literary Boosterism in the *New York Times*," October 27, 1997). The *NYTBR*, Caldwell says, regularly inflates the value of the novels it reviews, and the main reason, he thinks, is that it assigns most of its reviews to novelists rather than critics.

Novelists reviewing novelists have obvious reasons for erring on the side of charity. They know the agony of creation and the pain of having one's creation criticized. Fellow-feeling aside, the novelist/reviewer cannot be unaware of the possibility that the author he's reviewing may one day be reviewing him. The result, as any regular reader of the *NYTBR* is well aware, is lots of puff-ball reviews.

This, Mr. Caldwell thinks, is most unfortunate. Art is, or ought to be, serious business, and it is no part of the critic's job to act as "self-esteem builder for fledgling writers." The reviewer is charged with "the heavy responsibility of passing judgment." He fails in his responsibility when, "whether through logrolling or a misapplication of the Golden Rule to literary matters," he allows personal considerations to affect his judgment. If tough-minded reviewing exacts "a very high price in thwarted careers and bruised egos," so be it.

All my instincts are in accord with Mr. Caldwell's argument, and yet, when I reflect on my own reviewing career (some seventy-five reviews, which would be a lot if they hadn't been spread over thirty-three years), I have to admit that I don't entirely live up to the stern standards he sets. I could offer the excuse that I'm not in the business of appraising literary art. (Only once have I reviewed a novel, and on that occasion Mr. Caldwell couldn't have wished for more tough-mindedness: "There is little point in discussing [this book] as a piece of fiction. As a novel its failure is almost total: the plot is nonexistent, the situations have no credibility, and the characters are without a trace of authenticity." I went on like that at some length.)

But that argument won't wash. The books I review in history, political thought, social criticism, and religion have to do with ideas, great and small, and surely ideas are as deserving of serious treatment as art. And the books' authors have no more right to tender treatment of their psyches than do novelists.

Indeed, through most of my reviewing career I gave virtually no thought to personal considerations. I said precisely what I thought of the book at hand, and I doubt that any disinterested observer would conclude that it was my custom to err on the side of charity. Nor, I'm sure, would the authors I reviewed.

But in recent years I have found myself sensitive to personal considerations in ways I earlier was not. The reason is not, I think, softening with age (though I hope I'm less intellectually arrogant than I might once have been). Neither is it logrolling or misplaced charity. My own (non-review) writing has been in articles and essays, not books, and since such writing seldom attracts notice in print, I have little reason to fear retaliation. And, as a good Lutheran, I have a firm grasp on the distinction between love and justice.

What happened, simply, is that I moved. Until nine years ago, my writing was done in places—Kingston, Ontario, and Valparaiso, Indiana—comfortably removed from the headquarters of America's chattering classes. I could be impersonal about authors under review because, with rare exceptions, I had not met them and could assume I never would. Now I live and work in Manhattan, and things are quite different. The nature of my present position is such that I'm far more likely to know, however slightly, the people whose books I'm asked to review, and I cannot pretend that has no effect on what I write. (The New York intellectual world is surprisingly small. Had someone tossed a bomb into the ballroom at the Hotel Pierre that housed Norman Podhoretz's retirement party a few years ago, the entire neoconservative movement would have been wiped out.)

I had been in New York only a short time when I met a man at a reception whose book I had disparagingly reviewed several years earlier. As we were being introduced, he offered a wide and friendly smile. Then his memory clicked in, the smile froze, and he turned away quickly. What I had written was not, I think, unfair, but at that moment I wished I could take back the words that had clearly caused intense pain to someone who had done me no harm and who was, by all appearances, a perfectly decent man. If there is nothing wrong with telling the truth, why did I feel so bad?

Writers have long memories for unfriendly reviews. Not long ago at a book party I attended, a prominent New York intellectual refused to shake the hand of a man who had savaged one of his books some thirty years ago. Three decades may seem a long time to nurse a grievance, but the review had been so gratuitously and personally insulting—I remembered its contemptuous tone myself—that I could not blame the author. Yet reviews that have no

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touch of the personal can be as devastating as those that do, and can wound as deeply.

Editors, I have found, take very different approaches to what might be called the politics of reviewing. I have been asked to soften criticisms of books on the grounds that the author was an intellectual ally whom the editor did not wish to offend. I have also been asked to sharpen my comments on books where the editor suspected I was holding back because the author was ideologically sympathetic. All this gets one into ethically murky territory where, for me at least, it is difficult to lay down firm rules.

Mr. Caldwell's strictures have to do with general approaches to reviewing, not with matters of personal friendship or ideological affinity. But common problems arise. The border between the tough-minded and the ruthless, or the courteous and the cowardly, is often indistinct. A writer I know who recently wrote what I thought was a cruel review of someone who had befriended him in difficult times defended the review on grounds of intellectual integrity.

In the ethical murk, some rules are clear enough. You can't tell lies. You can't call a bad book good or a good book bad. You should avoid reviewing the books of people whom you personally dislike. And for reasons aesthetic and intellectual as well as moral, you shouldn't write puff-balls. But you can decline to review books by friends when you know or suspect that they are not very good. And you can frame reviews in ways that, without departing from the truth, put the best construction on a book's argument.

One thing for sure: all this was a lot easier in Indiana. FT

Mosaic

Psalm 144

My fingers twang the bowstring.
Arrows flying from the tower
Land whole armies at my feet.
What is one human,
That God should know or care about him or his children?
Steam clouds, shadows in the air.
Lightning makes the mountains smoke;
Broken sunlight, rainbows.
Nock your shafts, Lord, fix
Those strangers speaking languages
With no word for truth,
Who hold one hand out fingers crossed behind their back.
Teach me to pluck the heartstring, sing
Like David did before
Those strangers speaking languages
With no word for truth.
Set our sons in glazed
Enamelled tile patterns, inlaid
Daughters, walls and pillars.
Keep our pantries stocked with meat, fruit, grain, and drink.
Let no guest uninvited, come,
Nor welcomed, go.
When miseries shout in the street,
Take them in hand.

Laurance Wieder

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Opinion

The Second Time as Farce: Galileo Redux

Jonathan Carson

According to Bob Fletcher, a "full-time militia staff researcher," the government of the United States "has developed weather-tampering techniques to create drought and famine, so the New World Order can starve millions in America and control the rest."
— David Foster and Arlene Levinson, Associated Press, May 18, 1995

Executives of oil companies "can change the weather."
— Greenpeace

"Tomorrow's Weather: Brought to you by Big Business."
— Natural Resources Defense Council advertisement

"All of us here this morning are Paul Reveres of the environmental movement. We too are working as a team. The enemy is more subtle than a British fleet."
— Remarks by Vice President Al Gore to the Climate Change Conference

Before the Enlightenment, the weather was almost universally considered to be the result of divine forces. Pagans attributed atmospheric phenomena to Jupiter and his kindred gods; Christians attributed them to Divine Providence. The Enlightenment brought us scientific explanations of the weather. No longer did Jupiter hurl his thunderbolts; now Benjamin Franklin flew his kite into a storm. Nevertheless, until recently, many people, probably most, believed that God controls the weather. Even a tornado, they said, was God's will. All of a sudden, however, we are told that the weather, far from being controlled by God, far even from being subject to any reasonable scientific explanation, is controlled by businessmen and politicians. The Enlightenment removed the weather from divine control; the successors to the Enlightenment have placed it under human control.

Today's establishment belief that the weather is under human control represents the greatest intellectual change since Galileo observed the moons of Jupiter and the spots on the sun. In the West, prior to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the visible heavens were almost universally considered a semi-divine realm sharing in the eternity and incorruptibility of God. After Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton, the visible heavens were seen as obeying the same physical laws obeyed by objects on earth. The Renaissance and Enlightenment gave rise to science, an independent institution that sought naturalistic explanations for all physical events. Religious explanations gave way to scientific ones. A secular worldview arose that ignored the possibility that religious and scientific explanations might complement one another, that God could work, at least most of the time, through scientific law rather than against it. As a result, the advance of science, which should have brought about an improvement of religion and philosophy, worked against both. After Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton, it was no longer reasonable to consider the visible heavens or any other part of the natural world semi-divine; today our rulers claim in effect a semi-divine authority over the natural world. Galileo was famously persecuted; in *Earth in the Balance,* Al Gore compares himself and others worried about global warming to Galileo, and those complacent about global warming to Galileo's persecutors.

When we blame each other for weather we do not like, rather than accepting it as God's will or considering it the result of impersonal natural forces, when every degree too hot or too cold for our liking confirms our prejudices, when every unwelcome gust of air breeds resentment, when every rainy day we want to be sunny or sunny day we want to be rainy makes us hate each other all the more, when voters believe that the weather depends in some large and predictable way upon how they vote, when we fight vainly over nature's thermostat the way we fight over the temperature in our offices, we have truly entered a New World in which we must be Brave.

Al Gore usually speaks of controlling climate, not controlling weather, but it matters little which he says because even when he says climate, he means to suggest weather, and, after all, climate is made up of weather. Besides, the White House obliterated the distinction between weather and climate by inviting two hundred weather forecasters to discuss climate change, and, to tell the truth, controlling the climate is no easier than controlling the weather. So which is more insane, blaming the government for bad weather or blaming the Republicans? We have a Vice President as lost in the pecans and walnuts as an especially insane militia leader. More lost, really. If the government claims to be able to control the weather, who can blame someone for complaining when the

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weather does not turn out to his liking? Religion gave way to science, and now science has given way to madness, as it eventually had to do once divorced from true religion.

The story of Al Gore can be found in Samuel Johnson's masterpiece *Rasselas*. In search of wisdom, Imlac consults a learned astronomer. After numerous visits, Imlac wins the astronomer's trust, and the sage reveals to him his great secret: "Hear, Imlac, what thou wilt not without difficulty credit. I have possessed for five years the regulation of the weather, and the distribution of the seasons: the sun has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropic to tropic by my direction; the clouds, at my call, have poured their waters, and the Nile has overflowed at my command; I have restrained the rage of the dog-star, and mitigated the fervors of the crab. . . . I have administered this great office with exact justice, and made to the different nations of the earth an impartial dividend of rain and sunshine." The poor astronomer realizes that if he changes the weather for the better in one place, he risks making it worse somewhere else, so he must not "indulge" his "pride by innovation." He must avoid "disordering the seasons." All of his efforts, therefore, are devoted to maintaining the weather in exactly the same state that it would be should he do nothing. Now he is old and tired and wants Imlac to relieve him of the onerous burden of maintaining the weather exactly as it would be without his efforts.

When Imlac tells his companions the story of the astronomer gone mad, Princess Nekayah smiles, and Pekuah is convulsed with laughter, drawing Imlac's rebuke: "To mock the heaviest of human afflictions is neither charitable nor wise." The wise and charitable response to Al Gore, then, is pity. The astronomer's lament must be Gore's: "If the task of a king be considered as difficult, who has the care only of a few millions, to whom he cannot do much good or harm, what must be the anxiety of him, on whom depends the action of the elements, and the great gifts of light and heat!"

According to the misnamed "chaos theory," which is not a theory but a straightforward mathematical demonstration, unless the initial conditions of a system are known with infinite precision, the future behavior of that system cannot be predicted beyond narrow limits. Such a system is "complex" or "chaotic." Because of quantum indeterminacy, no physical system can be known with infinite precision. Therefore, the future behavior of all physical systems cannot be predicted beyond narrow limits. In the case at hand, the future weather and climate cannot be predicted beyond narrow limits. Weather and climate are "chaotic."

Nota bene: The unpredictability of physical systems is not simply a result of the limitations of human knowledge. Physical systems are inherently unpredictable. No amount of research or computer power can overcome this unpredictability. Even if we knew everything there is to know about the present state of the universe and had an infinite computing capacity, we would still be unable to predict future weather and climate beyond narrow limits. The unpredictability is part of the universe itself.

Many variables affect weather and climate. They are *variables*; that is, they change, and weather and climate change with them. The sun does not emit a steady amount of radiation, the earth does not orbit regularly around the sun, the orientation of the earth to the sun is not regular, the spin of the earth is not regular (days are much longer than they used to be due to the slowing of the earth's rotation), the orbit of the moon around the earth is not regular, asteroids and comets bombard the earth episodically, volcanic activity is not uniform, the interior of the earth is not static, the effect of life on the atmosphere varies, geologic features change, and so on. As a result, weather and climate are always changing. Even the rate of change varies. There is no such thing as a "background" rate of change. Change can be slow, or it can be exceedingly rapid, as in the case of asteroid impacts, volcanoes, or sudden variations of the output of the sun.

The aim of science, it is often said, is to predict and control. Chaos theory demonstrates that prediction and control are necessarily quite limited, despite what advances we make in science and technology. As a result, the scientific establishment (generously funded by that monument to attempted prediction and control, the federal government) feels threatened. In an attempt to preserve its lofty image, the scientific establishment has taken to presenting chaos theory to the public in a reassuring manner that robs it of its revolutionary implications. Order is said to underlie disorder, as if there were some pattern to be discerned that would make the disorder no longer disorderly. In fact, chaos theory shows that there would be disorder even in a deterministic universe. So long as the initial conditions of a deterministic universe could not be specified with infinite precision, the future of that universe could be predicted only to a narrowly limited extent. Deterministic laws (order) would then "underlie" disorderly results. The disorderly results, however, would be no less disorderly for having resulted from an orderly process. Order does not underlie disorder; disorder underlies order. Disorder results from order; order is pregnant with disorder. In any case, the universe is not deterministic, so the claim that order underlies disorder is academic.

Chaos theory is not exactly new. It is the mathematical expression of the old principle that a small thing can make a big difference. For want of a nail, the shoe was lost—and the losses proceed from shoe to horse to rider to message to battle to war to kingdom. A titanic chess duel hinges on the position of a single pawn. We small things may well make big dif-

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ferences in the weather, but we can understand our effects on the weather only in much the same way a pawn would understand a chess game or a single soldier in a foxhole would understand an entire war. We do affect the weather, but we can hardly know the effect or its magnitude. We cannot predict the weather beyond very narrow limits. Least of all can we control it. Al Gore is leading us into an *Alice in Wonderland* world where perspective is wildly distorted. We should be warned by the following lines from the poem at the beginning of fictional Alice's fictional adventure. They apply full well to our actual place in the actual universe.

> For both our oars, with little skill,
> By little arms are plied,
> While little hands make vain pretense
> Our wanderings to guide.

So how could we have a sanity-challenged Vice President and few people notice? The answer is that he and many others are prisoners of a sanity-challenged religion. When Shirley MacLaine blamed the eruption of Mount St. Helens on environmental destruction, most people probably thought, "Well, that's Shirley MacLaine for you." But *Elements of Literature: Introductory Course,* published by Holt, Rinehart, and Winston in 1997 and purchased in massive quantities by school boards in all parts of the United States, suggests to sixth-graders precisely that Mount St. Helens erupted because of threats to the environment. "Loo-Wit, the Fire-Keeper" is a Nisqually myth "retold" by Joseph Bruchac—a sure sign that if there ever were such a story, it would not resemble what our children are made to read. Loo-Wit is "a beautiful young woman" who "could no longer find peace as a human being," so the Creator changed her into a mountain. Now she is known as Mount St. Helens. The Creator "intended that humans should look at her beauty and remember to keep their hearts good, to share the land and treat it well. If we human beings do not treat the land with respect, the people said, Loo-Wit will wake up and let us know how unhappy she and the Creator have become again. So they said, long before the day in the 1980s when Mount St. Helens woke again." According to Shirley MacLaine and bogus Nisqually myths, environmental catastrophes take place because our crimes against the environment anger the New Age gods. According to Al Gore, environmental catastrophes take place because of our crimes against the environment. Al Gore just puts a pseudoscientific gloss on Shirley MacLaine's New Age beliefs and a myth of the Pacific Northwest retold by a white man from Saratoga Springs, New York, who had an Indian grandfather.

Gore displayed his New Age beliefs for all with eyes to see in *Earth in the Balance.* Christians might have thought that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For Al Gore, "faith" is "akin to a kind of spiritual gyroscope that spins in its own circumference in a stabilizing harmony with what is inside and what is out." Gore has come to believe "in the value of a kind of inner ecology that relies on the same principles of balance and holism that characterize a healthy environment." As if claiming to know how to control the weather were not enough, Gore presents himself as a Messiah come to deliver us from the "spiritual crisis in modern civilization that seems to be based on an emptiness at its center and the absence of a larger spiritual purpose."

Man in his actual state of (fallen) nature—as opposed to the fanciful state we keep hearing about—is a being living in fear of the gods and shame at his own bestiality. In an effort to placate the gods and set himself apart from the other beasts, he pours meal and oil and wine on fires and slices the throats of birds and sheep and sons and daughters and maidens and warriors. At the center of Christianity is a different understanding of sacrifice. Christ offered himself up on the Cross, making a full, complete, and perfect sacrifice for our sins, and not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world. No longer do we have to offer up our daughters when we want winds favorable to our sails, as Agamemnon sacrificed Iphigenia in order to get to Troy. Even though the Crucifixion made sacrifice unnecessary, in a secular world man reverts to his actual state of nature. Whatever his self-understanding, he lives again in fear of the gods and shame at his own bestiality, and he must sacrifice. Al Gore must sacrifice one-tenth of our economy to bring better weather. Since people sacrifice what is most dear to them, we can see what is most dear to our latter-day Galileo: other people's money.

Global warming complaints are based on the unstated assumption that the earth once had an ideal and unchanging climate. Before the Industrial Revolution or before civilization or before the evolution of man, weather was perfect. Then the evil activities of man brought about bad weather. Obviously, this myth is a perversion of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden.

Gore speaks again and again as if he actually believes that it is possible for climate not to change. In his speech to the Climate Change Conference, he applauds Sabrina Alimahomed, a fifteen-year-old girl who planted trees in a vacant lot in El Segundo, California. "If we succeed in blocking climate change," Gore says, "it will be because of the dedication" Sabrina and her compatriots have shown. The Vice President is telling teenage girls that if they plant trees and recycle, climate will no longer change in a world that has had billions of years of changing climates. Fear ye not, Sabrina, for Gore will arise, and rebuke the winds and the sea; and there will be a great calm. But the men will marvel, saying, What

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manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him! Everyone talks about the weather, and now he has done something about it!

The silver lining in the vast cloud of madness enveloping us? We now have proof, if ever we lacked it, that we are utterly lost without divine intervention. Anyone who has worked with the genuinely delusional knows that it is impossible to talk them out of their delusions. We need someone who can cast out demons.

Jonathan Carson *is a writer living in Austin, Texas.*

The Jogger's Wave

Preston Jones

"Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased," says the author of the Book of Daniel, and well does he describe late-twentieth-century North America. For not only are we in the midst of an ongoing explosion and expansion of knowledge (so-called), but more people than ever have taken up jogging. These are not entirely unrelated phenomena: a good bit of recent intellectual endeavor has been devoted to the study of jogging. Shoe manufacturers, for example, expend untold millions of dollars in their efforts to design the perfect jogging shoe. Yet to my knowledge the unique way that joggers address one another—what I have termed the "jogger's wave"—has heretofore been neglected both in the academy and in the media.

I should state at the outset that I do not pretend to a detailed knowledge of joggers' habits or of the psychology of jogging. Nor do I feel competent to contribute to the intense, longstanding, and emotionally charged debates waged between "joggers" and "runners." I nevertheless write with some confidence, for since 1986 I have observed waving joggers on the East Coast (Manhattan and Virginia Beach), the West Coast (Orange County, San Bernardino County, and Santa Rosa, California) and in eastern Canada (Ottawa, Ontario, and several cities in Quebec). I have observed joggers' waves dispensed in primarily Spanish-speaking communities and in multicultural cities. At present I live in Quebec where, of course, I jog in French. This study celebrates diversity.

One crucial thing readers must keep in mind is that the jogger's wave is distinct from other waves that are more familiar to the general public. We are all able to distinguish, for example, the "taxi hailer" and the "phony Miss America" from the polite, gently sweeping gesticulation employed by neighbors who would rather wave than speak to one another.

There is also the well-known "gosh-I-haven't-seen-you-for-a-long-time-and-actually-I-had-just-about-forgotten-you-existed" wave that occurs primarily in shopping venues, most especially in clothing and grocery stores. One thing that makes this wave difficult for researchers to study is that it is utilized only when its employers are startled and have been placed under instant stress—that is, they are forced to come up with small talk for at least several seconds. Unlike some other waves, this one amounts to much more than a simple physical maneuver or polite convention. For even as these wavers exclaim, "Ohhh . . . hiii," their waves send a silent message that goes something like this: "I would much rather not stand here in the cereal section and ask you perfunctory questions but . . ." The odd thing is that even though both participants would rather forgo the experience, they nonetheless involve themselves in it, albeit usually briefly.

Like the "gosh-I-haven't-seen-you-for-a-long-time-and-actually-I-had-just-about-forgotten-you-existed" wave, the jogger's wave sends a clear unspoken message—actually, several messages. It says, "We both know that we are too busy to jog but we find time to do so anyway"; and "Yes, I have suffered from shin splints too"; and "I agree—joggers are superior." Thus, in addition to being a social nicety, the jogger's wave conveys deeply held sentiments and beliefs shared by most participants.

Fortunately, the jogger's wave is easily described. Joggers approaching one another will usually begin preparing their waves when they are between seventy-five and fifty yards apart, at which point both joggers will drop their eyes to the ground. When the space between them is down to twenty-five yards they will look up and into one another's eyes or sunglasses. At fifteen yards the right or left forearm, depending on which side the other jogger is approaching, will be held momentarily horizontal. At about the six or seven yard mark, both joggers will rapidly flash their right or left palms at each other, with fingers usually held together. This wave is sometimes accompanied by a gentle "hoomph," a "hey," a "how ya doin'?", one head nod, or, in July and August, a sweaty sputter. It is generally considered indecorous to add anything more boisterous that these salutations to the jogger's wave.

If the jogger's wave is simple to describe, it is, in practice, among the more complex waves North Americans employ. First of all, it is rarely dispensed in the presence of automobiles. This is why, for example, the jogger's wave is not employed on the streets of Manhattan, but one can see it exercised in Central Park. Another point is that the jogger's wave is used most frequently near bodies of water. This can be observed in Ottawa, Ontario, where joggers' waves are distributed most liberally on the bicycle paths that follow the Rideau Canal and the Ottawa

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River. Exceptions to this general rule are areas where paths that are contiguous with bodies of water are crowded. Orange County's Balboa Island, for instance, is, of course, surrounded by water. Yet because its main sidewalk—which comprises the island's perimeter—is often packed with walkers, tourists, and so on, joggers usually refrain from waving there. (As this essay does not pretend to be an exhaustive study of the jogger's wave, but only an introduction to it, I shall not surmise here as to why joggers usually restrict their waves to relatively uncrowded spaces.)

Another important thing to understand about the jogger's wave is that it is not administered to all joggers. Indeed, it is reserved for *competent, highly skilled* joggers. The long-standing consensus among accomplished joggers is that slothful pseudo-joggers who barely get their feet off the ground—those whom I call "huffpuffers"—are unworthy of the wave. (Young children, the elderly, and persons on the high end of "middle age" are exempted from huffpuffer status.) Instead of dispensing waves to huffpuffers, seasoned joggers will usually adjust their sunglasses or walkman headphones or take a sudden interest in some peripheral event when approaching and passing them.

Other than proficient joggers, the only others who are sometimes awarded a jogger's wave are obviously serious bicyclists. For bicyclists to receive the wave they must be fully uniformed in bicycle-racer's gear and they should be grimacing. Studies have shown that most joggers respect power-walkers, but not highly enough, generally speaking, to honor them with a wave. Vulgarians such as roller-bladers are beneath notice.

It should be noted that joggers who, for whatever reason, do not dispense waves to others worthy of them are socially deficient. Like line-cutters, talkative theater-goers, and church ladies who promise to supervise coffee hour but fail to show up, non-waving joggers are, quite properly, held in low esteem in the serious jogging community.

If my account of the jogger's wave is accurate, it seems that Bible-believing joggers should be concerned about it, for it is doubtful whether the ethos that surrounds the wave can be squared with Scripture. In his Sermon on the Mount Jesus says, "And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as the your Father which is in heaven is perfect." The Phillips translation puts it like this: "And if you exchange greetings with your own circle, are you doing anything exceptional? Even the pagans do that much. No, you must be perfect, like your Heavenly Father." It seems, then, that Jesus would probably disapprove of the jogger's wave.

The question is whether any Scripture passages can be cited in support of the jogger's wave. The Bible has a good bit to say about jogging (or "running"). We are told in First Kings, for example, that "the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel." Unfortunately the writer does not tell us if the prophet waved to anyone in the course of his jog.

The Scriptures clearly allow Bible-believing joggers to be competitive. "Know ye not," queries St. Paul, "that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain." Indeed, foot racing is something to rejoice in, as Psalm 19:5 makes clear.

In Isaiah we read that "they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint." And from Psalm 147 we learn that God "delighteth not in the legs of a man." So it is probably safe to assume that huffpuffers are probably unspiritual or backslidden and, perhaps, that Bible-believing joggers are not obligated to approve of other joggers' gaits.

Clearly the Bible has some important things to say about jogging, but none of the Scripture passages I have consulted mitigate Jesus' injunction. Joggers are, as far as can presently be told, still constrained by Jesus' command to salute those outside their own "circle"— in this case, huffpuffers. In fact, if Jesus' words are taken to their logical conclusion, Bible-believing joggers might be obligated to dispense waves to casual bicyclists, walkers, roller-bladers, and, heaven help us, even skate-boarders.

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The Neo-Augustinian Temptation

Robert Benne

There is a rising strand of Christian social thought inspired by a fresh reading of Augustine's *City of God.* Those involved are prolific, erudite, and, for the most part, quite young. Their intellectual seniors include George Lindbeck and Stanley Hauerwas, both of whom helped to bring ecclesiology back into Christian ethics. But the young ones have taken off from there. Names like John Milbank and David Yeago in theology, Reinhard Hütter in ethics, and Richard Hays and N. T. Wright, biblical

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scholars upon whom the others draw heavily, are representative of this increasingly visible trend.

The movement, if it is cohesive enough to be called that, is committed to the construction of an independent and distinct churchly culture based upon the full narrative of Israel and the Church as it has been carried through the ages by the Great Tradition. Theologically, the neo-Augustinians are anti-foundationalists who believe that a religious tradition like Christianity is a cultural-linguistic system that cannot and should not be compromised by any standards not its own. They learned that from Lindbeck.

Biblically, they argue that the early Christianity depicted in the Pauline letters was a churchly "public" or culture of its own, flourishing along side of but radically distinct from the Roman, Jewish, and Hellenistic cultures of the time. "Paul already regards the Church as a new public order in the midst of the nations with its own distinctive culture," argues David Yeago. Christians who entered such a culture were "dying to the world" in the sense that they were entering a new ecclesial world.

Ethically, they contend that the practices of this distinct, living tradition form the Christian virtues that sustain such an ecclesial world. The Church's worship, preaching, teaching, and communal life shape the virtues that maintain the practices of marriage and family life, charity, hospitality, governance, art, and thought that provide a real alternative to the dying world about us. The Church essentially needs no sources other than its own for the ethical task. Milbank asserts that the Church produces its own "ecclesial society," with an attendant ontology, social theory, ethics, and economics.

Ecclesiology, that formerly unexciting branch of systematic theology, takes on urgency in the neo-Augustinians' writings. The Church is a constitutive dimension of the Gospel, manifesting a comprehensive new life. It is the Body of Christ in a direct and literal way, a people in continuity with the people of Israel. It needs to live truly from its own sources and forget about worldly relevance. "The Church is a public in its own right," says Hütter. "The world," when pressed hard, is simply another religious vision of life that is a poison when ingested uncritically by the Church.

The neo-Augustinians are sharply polemical. Above all, they are contemptuous of the "modern settlement," to use Yeago's term, in which secular, liberal society, with its procedural definition of justice, has succeeded in marginalizing the religious vision. The modern settlement has insisted on a "naked public square" in which religion is relegated to the private sphere of life. Meanwhile, modernity's own "scientific" way of understanding life is dogmatized as the only public meaning available. Rather than being "objective" or "scientific," secular social theories are, Milbank argues, "concealed theologies or anti-theologies." In this "settlement," Christian belief becomes a weekend hobby in no real competition with the really serious ways of understanding life in this world—sociology, psychology, economics, and political science.

A second object of the neo-Augustinians' disdain is the religious individualism—both sophisticated and kitsch—that has accepted the modern settlement. The sophisticated are the highly educated "new class" that Ernst Troeltsch typified many years ago as "mystics" who wouldn't be caught dead identifying themselves with a specific tradition or belonging to a real church. The kitsch-devotees are the practioners of the popular religion that searches for contact with the "divine spark" in each individual. This is the gnostic element ingrained in so much American religion. It has, these critics say, little moral seriousness and no people-forming capacities.

Almost as objectionable are the desiccated religious bodies that have accepted the modern settlement, albeit unconsciously. Mainstream church bodies have tacitly bought the argument that politics and therapy are more important than Christian faith, and have allowed their theologies to become handmaidens of ideology or psychology. They give sacred legitimation to secular knowledge and action and thereby become "relevant." (Several of the neo-Augustinians have made the surprising charge that the theology of Reinhold Niebuhr is best understood as a religious legitimation of liberal democracy.) These mainstream bodies, though they think they are involved in "transformation," are more likely being acculturated more deeply into the modern settlement. According to Hütter, such attempts ironically "deepen the Church's irrelevance and undermine its public (political) nature by submitting and reconditioning the Church according to the *saeculum*'s understanding of itself as the ultimate and normative public."

Other churches—represented by the church-growth movement—tacitly accept the notion that the religious needs and wants registered in the open market should be the guiding signals for religious practice. They become "relevant" in another way. But, as with the mainstream, they are no longer drinking from their own wells. In the church-growth world, according to Hütter, "religion itself increasingly becomes another commodity regulated by market forces."

The neo-Augustinian project strikes some critics as a new sectarianism, but it is far from that. Its proponents believe in culture—Christian culture. They are not inimical to the arts, music, politics, economic life, education. But these cultural activities, they insist, will have to be renewed—if not entirely rebuilt—on Christian assumptions. Culture under the modern settlement is depleting its inheritance from the Christian past and is gradually descending into perversion and chaos. A new culture must arise from the Church.

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The neo-Augustinians are also catholic—even if they are Lutherans, Methodists, or Presbyterians. They transcend modern Christian divisions by attempting to retrieve a premodern Christian consensus. They have a "high" Christology, sacramentology, and ecclesiology and are committed to maintaining strong continuity with the great catholic tradition. They emphasize Catholic substance over Protestant principle.

There is much that is attractive and compelling in this movement. Its confidence in and clarity about orthodox Christianity is highly persuasive. It is refreshing to encounter serious thinkers who argue unabashedly that the Christian vision is true and trustworthy and that it matters ultimately.

This neo-Augustinian outlook is particularly tempting in moments when one is convinced that the current culture of the West is unraveling. Modernity's commitment to individual rights and procedural justice seems to have no way of affirming substantive moral notions as to how we should live together in community. Indeed, "rights talk" is used as a trump card to override the inherited moral substance of our common life. The Protestant culture that provided the social glue for most of American history is in shambles and shows scant prospect of being revived or renewed. What little remains of the Protestant Establishment indicates no commitment to such traditional Judeo-Christian notions as the sanctity of life at its beginning and end, of marriage as a lifelong convenant of fidelity between a man and a woman, of intrinsic, non-utilitarian moral norms, or of the grateful acceptance of given conditions of life.

As one watches the moral norms that make for decency and restraint slowly erode, it is tempting to declare a pox on our national house and opt out of the struggle for a common culture. It would be pleasant to lose oneself in an ecclesial culture that affirms orthodox Christianity and is eagerly building a parallel culture, one built on the rock of faith instead of the endlessly shifting sands of modernity. In such circumstances, one could quit the perpetual struggle with those in both church and society who seem to have wholeheartedly bought into the modern settlement. Who wants always to appear reactionary or nostalgic?

This new vision offers the prospect of creating a genuine "people," not merely a collection of political or psychological activists or, worse, religious consumers. It aims at incorporating full persons into a full ecclesial culture that can overcome the terrible fragmentation of modern life into semi-autonomous spheres of existence. One would have a coherent and cohesive "world" to live in along side the decaying world around it. Wasn't this in fact what the early Church provided at the beginning of the common era?

Ah, but wait. As attractive as this neo-Augustinian vision is, it is finally more a temptation than a real option. The main reason is theological. If God is indeed the creator and sustainer of the larger world of economics, politics, and culture, then we as Christians are called to witness there. Our salvation is not in that witness, but our obedience is. And though we know that much of contemporary culture is debased, we also know that it is not beyond redemption. Indeed, reminding ourselves of the illusions of perfectionism, we might even grant that, relatively speaking, it is not all that bad. In any case, modernity's own norms of procedural justice and individual rights offer openings for Christian witness.

From this theological perspective, it is better to side with those who are willing to struggle for a decent, common culture—even though success is by no means assured. The right-to-life groups, the Christian Coalition, Bread for the World, the American Family Association, and many others make a worthwhile difference in the struggle for America's soul. And these religious groups have secular allies. The "principled pluralism" suggested by Os Guinness that aims at an overlapping moral consensus is not without prospects of success in the lively world of American politics. There is still much that is good—given and sustained by the Creator—in our common life outside the church.

We need also to remind ourselves how suffocating and stultifying it can be to inhabit an exclusively ecclesial reality. The ecclesial realities that have historically been constructed have often been as oppressive as their secular counterparts. When the neo-Augustinians write glowingly about ecclesial life, one wonders what church they are talking about. Even the strongest churches I have known could be characterized more aptly as bands of forgiven sinners than as shining knights in the Kingdom of God. Indeed, when one thinks of real, existing ecclesial publics, one thinks most immediately of the mega-churches that do in fact create a parallel culture for their members. Yet whatever the mega-churches' contributions to Christian life and mission in the late twentieth century, they do not seem to measure up to what the neo-Augustinians have in mind. One wonders what church could measure up.

There is much to be cherished in the neo-Augustinian vision. We do need to become more of a people shaped by a richer and more comprehensive ecclesiology. We do need to center on the Grand Narrative of the Great Tradition. We do need to march to the beat of a drum other than the world's. But at the same time we need to witness in and struggle for that world. That is our calling. That is the Church's calling.

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The Music of "Having Church"

Michael Linton

"Outrage!" "Shocking insensitivity!" "Boycott!" Art, in recent years, has raised any number of protests, but this time it isn't Jesse Helms and his cronies complaining about taxpayer-funded obscenity. Now it's the radical left, howling over Angie and Debbie Winans' anti-gay gospel hit, "It Ain't Natural" (on their CD *Bold*, ATF Records, 1997).

Problem is, it is "natural." And this is not a comment either way on sexual orientation or behavior. It's natural for black gospel music to rouse the passions, scourge the ego, harangue the sinful, sooth the battered, and comfort the afflicted. The Winans aren't doing anything unusual in their song. They're simply doing what gospel musicians have been doing for about eighty years. They're just "having church."

Gospel music is "about church." It's music of Christian brothers and sisters who come together to praise Jesus and tell what he has done for *us*—first person plural. The grammar is significant. While related to spirituals, gospel is a distinct genus. Not only are the spirituals a closed repertory, being confined to those songs composed during the captivity of African-Americans, but they are also typically intensely subjective and intimate, full of what in Lieder is called *Innigkeit:* "Take away the world, give me Jesus," "Nobody knows the trouble I've seen," "I'm crossin' over into campground," "Sweet chariot, comin' for to carry me home." These are songs about the sufferings and the hopes of an individual, sufferings often obscured by code language because someone who is only "three-fifths human" (the fraction used to count blacks in the antebellum census) shouldn't be seen to be suffering. Even when sung publicly by a group, these are songs of single souls whose agony is shackled.

But there's nothing shackled about gospel. This is music about freedom. Gospel is full of shoutin', and clappin', and testifyin'; it is the witness required by liberation. Even when the texts speak of "me" and "I," this "I" is not the signature of an isolated individual, but the "I" of a person standing next to another person, both sharing the experience of redemption, and each uplifting the other with his testimony. In this sense, gospel music is not recital music. It is not music to be listened to, contemplated, and applauded when it's done. It is music to be sung, and encouraged, and commented on. That's why the congregation at a gospel concert (there is no "audience") will often stand, sing, clap, dance, and testify—loudly—with the singers. This is music of the family, and at this table, nobody is asked to be silent.

As is appropriate for a repertory so devoted to the expression of liberation, in gospel considerable freedom is given for improvisation over standard forms. The typical gospel choir (singing in three parts—two female and one male—with piano, organ, and drum accompaniment) learns the body of a song by rote. But in performance, the director elongates the piece through repetition and modulation while a soloist (if there is one) is expected to extemporize text and music. Sometimes these improvisations become melismatic outpourings of religious ecstasy, sometimes a kind of parlando recitative sermon—but they are always constructions of the moment, punctuated by various methods of congregational approbation.

The improvisatory character of gospel both clarifies and confuses its relationship to jazz. Like jazz, gospel is the musical child of West African rhythmic traditions and Anglo-American harmonic practice. Both use call and response forms and both prize spontaneity. Yet that is where the similarity stops. Although jazz is now a fully developed classical repertory of international scope with its own artists, conservatories, theory, and historical scholarship, it has never completely shaken its roots in river town bordellos and big city nightclubs. Jazz is a secular genus (Duke Ellington's late sacred compositions not withstanding) and its most enduring form the "blues."

But in gospel, there is no blues. Not only is that three-phrase form largely absent, its very aesthetic is antithetical to the genus. Like Gregorian chant, gospel is inextricably music of the church. And although gospel now has its commercial side too, it remains stubbornly connected to those roots. It is music of a people who choose, in spite of the "blues," to testify that "the Lord will make a way."

Those roots are well seen in Sony's rerelease on CD of Newark's Abyssinian Baptist Church Gospel Choir, recorded in 1960 (*Shakin' the Rafters*, #47225 AAD). Directed by Alex Bradford, the choir sings a dozen of this legendary gospel director's songs. Given big enough speakers, this CD won't shake the rafters, it will blow them off. This is gospel at its most full throated and buoyant. The CD's final track, "The Lord Will Make A Way," leaves little doubt that these singers have not only found a way, but are strutting joyfully down it. The CD's program booklet on the history of gospel by Leonard Goines is alone worth the price.

The relationship between gospel music and black preaching has been commented on frequently. Not only does the musical form of call and response echo the give and take between preacher and congregation, but gospel's improvisations grow directly out of black hermeneutical oratory. The first track on the 1996 CD of the Rev. Clay Evans and the AARC Mass Choir (*Coming Home*, Savoy Records, SCD 14830)

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begins near the end of Pastor Evans' sermon on the Prodigal Son. The preaching flows seamlessly into Milton Biggham's gospel song "Coming Home" in what becomes an almost irresistibly compelling altar call. This same unity between exegesis, exhortation, and liturgy is captured in *Having Church* (Savoy Records, SCD 7099). Among several remarkable tracks on this CD of the Rev. James Cleveland and the Southern California Community Choir is "What Shall I Do," featuring the powerful simplicity of Rev. Cleveland's preaching.

A newer face of gospel music, influenced to a degree by rhythm and blues and the onset of commercial arranging, is seen in the *Rev. Milton Brunson's Thompson Community Singers* released by Sony on the Word label (1997, EK 679393). Recorded live at Chicago's Christ Tabernacle Baptist Church, the singers present new gospel songs by Percy Bady and Darius Brooks supported by a sophisticated array of acoustic instruments and electronic keyboards. But its message is unaffected and direct, and Brooks' "He Satisfies" is a model of rhythmic nuance and imagination.

There is a rich tradition of solo artists in gospel, and the queen of that tradition is still Mahalia Jackson (1911-1972). As part of a series of "Sixteen Most Requested Songs" (there are also CDs featuring Guy Lombardo, Bing Crosby, Mel Torme, etc., etc.), Sony released in 1996 a collection of Jackson recordings made between 1954 and 1967 (Columbia Legacy, CK 64991). Jackson was at her best when she worked with the pianist/arranger Mildred Falls, and this CD includes nine recordings from that remarkable collaboration.

But the release is important in another way. Jackson was one of the first gospel artists to feel the pressure of commercially minded record executives to subdue the specifically Christian content of her music in favor of its more generic "soul" elements. In a 1963 Hollywood recording of "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen" (not done with Falls), Jackson substitutes "Nobody knows my sorrow" for the traditional second line, "Nobody knows but Jesus." The singing is remarkable, the refrain swings, and the recording is polished. But the gospel is diminished. Fortunately, an earlier version of the same spiritual—preserving the original text—is available on the 601 Music label (*Mahalia Jackson in the Upper Room,* MCD 3117).

Gospel soloists since Jackson have been well aware of the rewards—and prices—of tailoring their music to fit a "worldly" audience. Some artists, such as Ray Charles (who began his career as a pianist in a gospel group) and Aretha Franklin (daughter of the gospel preacher Rev. C. L. Franklin), enjoy successful secular careers. But many artists stubbornly resist such a move. In 1997, both Cissy Houston (mother of Whitney) and Andraé Crouch released new collections that were resolutely Christian (Houston: *He Leadeth Me,* House of Blues 13122; Crouch: *Pray,* Quest Records, 9 45924-2). And it has been the specifically Christian content of *Bold* that has produced such a furor for the Winans. Other artists who maintain and develop that tradition are Albertina Walker, Shirley Caesar, John P. Kee, and Kirk Frankland.

But my favorite new gospel release isn't by an established artist or even on a major label. It's a CD of a group of reformed drug addicts recorded in a Harlem church (*The ARC Choir: "Walk with Me,"* Maple-shade label, MS 04132). When the thirty members of the Addicts Rehabilitation Center Gospel Choir sing, their music carries a diamond-like conviction: fire tested and brilliantly true. This collection of traditional gospel songs arranged by the choir's director Curtis Lundy isn't for the timid. Pleasant religious mood music it is not. It's a no-holds-barred performance by men and women for whom faith is a matter of life and death. And while the Winans have sparked protests from the politically correct, surely this CD must send the devils themselves howling. Well, let 'em howl. Preach it, praise Jesus.

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The Irony of American Power

Andrew J. Bacevich

I

The overarching theme of twentieth-century geopolitics has been America's success in prevailing over its competitors for global power. A century ago, the United States was a continental power exercising only a peripheral influence on international politics. Today, having outlasted, exhausted, or crushed its rivals, the United States dominates world affairs. The millennium ends with the world's foremost democracy holding sway as Great Power without peer.

America's rivals, to be sure, contributed mightily to their own demise. Besotted with ambition, empires in our age have betrayed an astonishing propensity for self-inflicted wounds. Choosing war in 1914, Wilhelm II wrecked German aspirations to *Weltpolitik*. Ransacking Africa in search of easy conquest, Mussolini laid bare the fraudulence of his new Roman empire. Plunging into the morass of endless war with China, Japan doomed its vision of East Asian hegemony. Craving *Lebensraum* to the East, Hitler bled his armies to death and destroyed his Thousand-Year Reich. Ordering their legions into Afghanistan, the sclerotic lords of the Kremlin exposed the flimsiness of Soviet authority and the bankruptcy of Marxism-Leninism. Thus the history of the past hundred years offers a moral lesson to complement the geopolitical theme of America's rise to preeminence. Of the dangers that threaten a Great Power, the most insidious come from within.

This great moral lesson of imperial hubris sounds a warning that Americans today should heed. To sustain the favored position to which the United States has risen, they must succeed where others have failed—devising a grand strategy that permits the responsible exercise of power while steering clear of the shoals of arrogance and vainglory. This is a tall order. Filling that order requires first a proper understanding of the situation in which the United States now finds itself.

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II

That situation is replete with irony. A nation born of the first great anti-imperial revolution, the United States finds itself today wielding authority and influence in every corner of the globe. A state that once spurned interference by outsiders has acquired a well-documented reputation for instructing others on how to conduct themselves on matters ranging from human rights to environmental regulation. A people once profoundly suspicious of militarism tacitly embrace military power as a central element of national identity. How are we to account for the paradoxes to which America's emergence as the world's foremost power has given rise?

The traditional narrative of American history dodges that question, suggesting that the outcome was not of our doing: greatness was thrust upon us. This orthodox view of history asserts that the United States did not advance purposefully to center stage in world affairs; it was drawn there reluctantly, contrary to its traditions and the preferences of its people. According to this interpretation, America's transformation from unassuming republic to global superpower was unforeseen and unintended. The United States assumed a paramount role in world affairs only under duress, prodded by malevolent forces that became in the end too monstrous to ignore.

Thus, evil has provided warrant for action. The all-but-forgotten war with Spain now a hundred years past set the pattern. For years, Americans had watched as Cubans suffered abuse at the hands of a decadent and incompetent imperial regime. Finally,

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in 1898, further Spanish control of Cuba became intolerable. When the smoke of the ensuing conflict cleared, the United States had indeed ejected Spain from Cuba, but had acquired in the process an insular empire of its own, stretching from the Caribbean across the Pacific. In the decades to follow, the recurrence of wickedness in various guises—the militarism of Imperial Germany and Japan, the totalitarian ideologies of Hitler and Stalin, more lately the tinhorn depredations of Saddam Hussein—would offer impetus and justification for the further expansion of American power.

This interpretation of the nation's rise to globalism—the United States *reacting* to peace disrupted, rights defiled, and freedom jeopardized—is one that most Americans have found persuasive. It is reassuringly familiar and morally satisfying. For the average citizen, the standard historical narrative has provided a convenient map for navigating through the perilous and deceptive terrain of twentieth-century politics. But a map only approximates reality. Sketched in response to the press of events, the historical map charting the progress of the Reluctant Superpower has never been completely accurate. Of late, it has become increasingly misleading. Most of all, with the end of the Cold War, it is no longer useful. Indeed, to cling to that map is to misapprehend the hazards that lie just ahead.

If Americans have vigorously defended their way of life against external threat, it is also true that they have sought to imprint that way of life on others. No people on earth have been more eager to see the world remade in their own image. The whole trajectory of Western history, pointing toward an expansion of freedom, equality, and opportunity, only served to validate this belief in American mission, even fostering the notion that the United States possessed a providential mandate to spread the blessings of liberty. Thus, even before leading the nation into war to make the world safe for democracy, Woodrow Wilson could declare with certainty that "God [had] planted in us the vision of liberty" and that the United States had been "chosen, and prominently chosen, to show the way to the nations of the world how they shall walk in the paths of liberty."

Wilson's purpose was not simply to defend American principles, but to secure their extension on a universal basis, a breathtakingly radical proposition. Nor did that proposition die with Wilson. Once revived by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the spirit and grandeur of the Wilsonian project animated the policies and the rhetoric of subsequent administrations as dissimilar as those of John Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. "If we judge events by their consequences," John Lukacs has observed, "the great world revolutionary was Wilson rather than Lenin." Indeed, if we judge the age of revolutions by its outcome, the United States has been the most successful revolutionary power of them all.

To posit the United States as an ascendant revolutionary power is to pose uncomfortable questions that the narrative of the Reluctant Superpower has heretofore allowed Americans to evade. What is the motive force underlying the growth of American revolutionary power? What will it cost the United States to maintain the order in which the American revolution has culminated? What are the moral dilemmas to which the triumph of this revolution is likely to give rise?

III

The American foreign policy establishment would prefer, for the most part, that citizens remain oblivious to these questions. Indeed, foreign policy professionals in general have a strong preference for citizens who don't ask questions, believing that in a democracy the conduct of foreign policy is most effective when the people are compliant—as was the case in the United States through most of the postwar era.

To be sure, the collapse of communism threatened momentarily to remove the basis for that compliance. Scrambling to check the erosion of popular support for American globalism—an erosion made painfully evident by the humiliating electoral defeat of a "foreign policy President" in 1992—the foreign policy establishment threw itself into the task of devising a new formula to justify America's role in the world. Much as the promulgation of an "official" interpretation of the Cold War's origins in the late 1940s had helped forge a broad anti-Communist consensus, so an authoritative interpretation of the Cold War's "lessons" might lay the foundation for a post-Cold War consensus. By limiting the boundaries of permissible discourse, foreign policy professionals hoped to minimize any discontinuity of American policy caused by the disappearance of the Evil Empire that had provided the primary rationale for that policy.

The exhilarating—and rightly celebrated—culmination of the Soviet-American rivalry provided an ideal point of departure for this undertaking. Thus, the premise of the new orthodoxy was simplicity itself: We Won. As applied to future policy, the implications of winning were twofold. First, the outcome of the Cold War affirmed the wisdom, capacity, and continuing imperative of "American leadership" exercised on a global scale. Second, the fresh circumstance to which that success had given way presented the United States with a "strategic opportunity" to create a peaceful and prosperous international order enduring far into the future.

As a result, throughout the 1990s the national "conversation" about foreign policy has focused obsessively on a single issue: will the United States grasp the opportunity that beckons? Or, as it has on earlier occasions, will the Reluctant Superpower

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give in to irresponsibility and backsliding, with all the dire results that will ensue as a consequence?

Thus, to judge by the atmospherics surrounding the foreign policy crises of the past several years, the world's "indispensable nation" (a phrase favored by President Clinton) teeters on the brink of headlong retreat. Americans, we are led to believe, may at any moment turn their backs on the world. Such ostensibly precarious circumstances have encouraged advocates and interest groups to advertise their favorite issue as *the* crucial test of America's willingness to stay the course. In this way, the Bosnian civil war, awful enough on its own terms, gets inflated into Sarajevo 1914; reluctance to ratify NAFTA points directly to the reimposition of the Smoot-Hawley Tariff; and NATO enlargement becomes the all-or-nothing equivalent of the Versailles Treaty.

Thus refurbished and renewed, the narrative of the Reluctant Superpower retains its potency: hand wringing over the supposed American penchant for fecklessness retains undeniable tactical utility. Yet in a larger sense this mythic version of U.S. diplomacy is counterproductive and even dangerous. The proposition that on any given issue the United States faces a stark choice between Engagement or Abandonment is simply spurious. Whether intended or not, the real effect of portraying U.S. foreign relations as a succession of crises, each posing a critical test of national resolve, is to divert attention from the actual dilemmas awaiting the United States as a triumphant sponsor of revolution.

We have entered radically different terrain. We need a new map. We need a new narrative.

IV

The new narrative would incorporate material heretofore deemed extraneous or distracting. It would set aside notions that the United States is innocent and the world corrupt. It would not pretend that America's abiding aspiration has been simply to live in peace that others obdurately deny to us. Rather than purporting to disdain power, it would allow instead that power in all of its dimensions—political, military, economic, and cultural—has been central to America's revolutionary purposes. It would emphasize the positive as distinguished from the defensive or reactive role of power. It would accept as fact that the United States acquires and exercises power in order to enable American society to flourish and to extend the sway of American values. It would acknowledge that those twin objectives are inextricably linked.

In short, the new narrative would both recognize and ratify the grand enterprise in which the United States has been engaged, off and on, for a century. That enterprise spans administrations, transcends party and ideology, and persists—as has become apparent since the demise of the Soviet Union—independent of any immediate threat to American security. The historian John Lewis Gaddis has characterized the result as "an empire by invitation." If so, the invitation is one to which those presiding over U.S. foreign policy have long since given collective assent. As a direct result of that enterprise, the United States has ascended to the status of global hegemon, with far-flung interests and responsibilities and without a challenger worthy of the name. The implicit, if officially unacknowledged, grand strategy of the United States today is to consolidate and preserve its world supremacy, with the clear understanding that doing so may well require the further extension of American influence.

Both the neoliberals and the neoconservatives who together preside over the contemporary political scene endorse that enterprise. Both camps happily credit American leadership with whatever good has emerged from an otherwise disastrous century, from the democratization of Germany and Japan to the final collapse of communism. Both agree that military power undergirds the effectiveness of that leadership. Both, therefore, are committed to maintaining world-dominant military capabilities, a sharp departure from traditional American practice when the passing of crisis meant reverting to a minimalist establishment. They are united in opposing critics, coming from the right or the left, who express reservations about a strategy of global preeminence, whether on practical or moral grounds. They denounce such critics as timid, fretful, pessimistic, defeatist—and, predictably, tag them as Isolationists. In other important respects, however, the neoliberals and neoconservatives differ in their vision of American hegemony. Those opposing visions—and the peculiar contradictions that each entails—define the real fault lines in the glacis of present-day U.S. foreign policy.

The administration of President Bill Clinton embodies contemporary neoliberalism. Yet the prefix "neo" is misleading. Apart from promoting a trendy Global Agenda that purports to incorporate environmental issues, population control, and women's rights into the foreign policy mainstream, little about the neoliberal perspective deserves the appellation "new." In public pronouncements, neoliberals affirm their commitment to human rights. They recite clichés about the United States leading a "community of nations" engaged in "multilateral" efforts to alleviate the world's problems. But the essence of neoliberal thinking derives from old-fashioned liberal economics. In President Clinton's succinct formulation, "trade, investment, and commerce" will produce "a structure of opportunity and peace." For neoliberals, cutting trade deals, reducing tariffs, protecting property rights, and running interference for American private enterprise—the entire package gilded with the idiom of globalization and earnest professions of America's abiding concern for

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democracy and human rights—constitute the heart of foreign policy.

Clinton Administration officials tout this emphasis on the economic dimension of foreign policy as a remarkable innovation. Thanks to Bill Clinton, then Secretary of Commerce Mickey Kantor bragged in 1996, "trade and international economics have joined the foreign policy table." In fact, such claims to originality—if standard fare for this uniquely self-absorbed administration—are without merit. The Clinton White House has simply revived themes already much in evidence a century or more ago and never entirely absent from U.S. foreign policy since. The expectation that securing a world open to trade and investment will enable America to do good even as it does well fits squarely in the hoary tradition of Herbert Hoover and Cordell Hull.

If the prospect of creating structures of peace provides the ostensible inspiration for the neoliberal preoccupation with trade and investment, anxiety reinforces that hope. American well-being, neoliberals believe, *depends upon* continuous economic growth. Economic expansion, in turn, depends on increasing the American share of the global economy, especially in rapidly developing regions such as Latin America and the Asia-Pacific. Thus, according to then Secretary of State Warren Christopher speaking in 1996, "We've passed the point where we can sustain prosperity on sales within the United States." Current Secretary of State Madeleine Albright agrees: "Our own prosperity depends on having partners that are open to our exports, investment, and ideas." Without sustained expansion of trade and investment in these "emerging markets," the American economy is likely to falter, with potentially disastrous consequences. To President Clinton himself, the issue is axiomatic: "Without growth abroad, our own economy cannot thrive."

For neoliberals, there is literally no alternative to growth. Abundance mutes tensions and papers over contradictions, in many cases the byproducts of past liberal experiments. Thus, behind the Clinton Administration's acknowledgment of economic interdependence lies the fear that any substantial lapse in economic expansion could well ignite a crisis for which modern liberalism, bereft of fresh ideas, will be without response. Failure to secure expansion abroad invites calamity at home.

When it comes to military affairs, neoliberals strike appropriately progressive attitudes, professing to look forward to the day when economic forces will render military power obsolete. In the meantime, the imperative of maintaining the order required of a highly interdependent world economy prods them to use force with notable frequency. The emphasis is on using military forces not to win wars but as an international constabulary. Yet a fully effective implementation of this approach would anticipate and forestall rather than merely react. Thus, for neoliberals, the lure of using American military power not simply to quell disorder but to prevent it in the first place can become irresistible. In this regard, although hardly noticed by the American public, a recent military exercise provides the best illustration to date of the evolving neoliberal paradigm for the role of U.S. forces after the Cold War.

In September 1997, when a contingent of American troops, after twenty exhausting hours in Air Force transports, parachuted into Kazakhstan, one of five new Central Asian republics, they went where no U.S. forces had gone before. American soldiers did not venture into this remote corner of the former Soviet Union to support and defend the Constitution or to protect the United States against enemies foreign and domestic. Instead, according to the general in command, they deployed to demonstrate America's "global capability" and, by participating in exercises with local armies, to signal that the United States has important interests in this desolate, but energy rich, region. State Department officials and Pentagon planners look to a periodic American military presence in Central Asia to create a climate of stability, putting in place political rules of behavior and giving potential rule-breakers pause. Henceforth, he who threatens the stability of Central Asia invites confrontation with the world's only superpower. Thus, even in an era of no overt enemies, does neoliberalism's preoccupation with order give rise to new security commitments in distant places about which the average American knows little and cares less.

Neoliberals pursue American hegemony by indirection. Neoconservatives make no effort to conceal their intentions. Leading neoconservative writers have no problem acknowledging the paramount status of the United States as the world's only superpower. Indeed, they revel in it. Thus, for example, when William Kristol and Robert Kagan write unblushingly about an American "responsibility to lead the world," the style of leadership they have in mind bears little resemblance to pussy-footing multilateralism. Kristol and Kagan want the United States to place itself unambiguously in charge, exercising a "benevolent global hegemony" based on "moral supremacy and moral confidence."

Nor do neoconservatives flinch at the prospect of America therefore assuming the role of global policeman. Indeed, writes Joshua Muravchik, "it must be more than that." A policeman enforces laws set by others; he gets orders from higher authority. In today's world, however, "there is no higher authority than America." Hence the need, according to Muravchik, for the United States to serve not only as policeman but also as global mediator, teacher, and benefactor—and, by implication, magistrate, disciplinarian, nanny, and crusader.

Acutely conscious of the disarray into which Amer-

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ican culture has fallen, neoconservatives remain intensely nationalistic. (Indeed, neoconservative writers sometimes hint that a glorious crusade in a noble cause might be just the thing to reinvigorate the flagging sense of American identity.) They admit to no limits on what the forceful exercise of American leadership can accomplish. For writers like Michael Ledeen, the United States has a "historic mission" to animate "a worldwide mass movement against all forms of tyranny." Does China persist in opposing the rising tide of democratization? The solution, according to the columnist George Will, is simple: the policy of the United States "should be to inoculate China with the American spirit," thereby "melting . . . the Chinese regime's apparatus of social control."

To back up their faith in the American spirit, neoconservatives look to armed force. "The bedrock of America's global leadership," writes Muravchik, "is military might." Although Pentagon spending currently exceeds the combined defense budgets of the next several largest powers (most of them longstanding U.S. allies), neocons are not content. Kristol and Kagan, for example, want to increase military spending by $60-80 billion per year, essentially restoring the American defense budget to Cold War levels.

Neoconservatives justify the need for a robust military establishment not to support the sort of ventures that neoliberals pursue under the guise of peacemaking, but to deter or preempt the rise of a peer competitor. In the neoconservative view, "chaos" in the underdeveloped world, "rogue states," the spread of ethnic violence and religious fundamentalism—candidates in the competition to devise a new paradigm for international security—are matters of no more than secondary importance. They do not directly threaten American security. If the United States cannot altogether ignore, say, violence in the Balkans or anarchy in a failed sub-Saharan state, neither should Americans allow such matters to mask far more serious if less immediate dangers. One danger in particular gives neoconservatives pause: the prospect of a resurgent Russia or an affluent and technologically sophisticated China—or both—ten or twenty years hence mounting a serious challenge to American dominance.

Neoconservatives do not relish the prospect of a future showdown between competing superpowers. Although more hawkish in their rhetoric than neoliberals, they tend to be considerably more circumspect when it comes to the actual use of force. To avert military confrontation, neoconservatives look ultimately to a process of transformation, converting prospective adversaries to democratic capitalism, whether by example, cajolery, or coercion.

Preserving the leading position of the United States, therefore, demands ideological rather than economic expansionism. This linkage of American interests with the spread of American ideals underlies sharp differences between neoconservatives and neoliberals when it comes to trade policy and human rights. Unwilling to countenance the slightest disruption of American economic growth, the neoliberal Clinton Administration subordinates political and security considerations in order to reap short-term commercial benefits. One sees this most vividly in the eagerness with which the Clinton White House pursues expanded commercial relations with China even if that means sharing advanced technology adaptable for military purposes and ignoring the widespread violation of human rights. Neoconservatives are no less predisposed to favor free trade. But they view trade less as an end in itself than as an instrument to support the larger goal of securing the global adoption of American values. The principle of free trade can be compromised; the commitment of the United States to its fundamental ideals must not. Thus, when it comes to democracy and human rights, in contrast to the yawning gap between neoliberal talk and action (again, Clinton on China illustrates the point), neoconservatives are the custodians of American exceptionalism and the true heirs of Woodrow Wilson. Like Wilson, they aspire to a leadership that is at once universal in extent and thoroughly American in character.

V

Each of these competing visions of the American imperium will give rise to its own complications. In both, the pitfalls awaiting the United States are large. They alike contain large defects that call into question their prospects for success.

The neoliberal vision is unsustainable, a military-economic Ponzi scheme. With delicious irony, the Clinton Administration's aggressive sponsorship of American commercial interests recalls the revisionist critique of American diplomacy devised a generation ago by the New Left. Back when the President and his friends were attending Georgetown and Oxford, writings by William Appleman Williams and other members of the "Open Door School" were all the rage. These historians argued that the beginning of enlightenment lay in ripping the mask off of U.S. foreign policy. New Left scholars declared that all the Cold War talk about defending the "Free World" was so much hokum. The record of American diplomacy amounted to ill-disguised economic imperialism, aimed at penetrating and dominating foreign markets. Making ceaseless economic expansion abroad the sine qua non of prosperity and stability at home condemned the United States to perennial conflict—Vietnam was a case in point—and would undermine democracy at home. Thirty years later, with pronouncements by senior Clinton Administration officials seemingly cribbed from Chamber of Commerce propaganda, the Open Door thesis—at least in this one respect—deserves a second look.

Thus, it is a safe bet that Professor Williams would

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find the military adventurism of the singularly unmilitary Clinton Administration unsurprising. By asserting that American well-being is contingent upon access to an orderly and expanding global economy, neoliberal dogma makes it imperative that the United States guarantee that order. When Mr. Clinton sends rangers to take out General Aideed in Somalia, occupies Haiti, launches punitive strikes against Saddam Hussein, intervenes in Bosnia, or sails a carrier task force into the middle of a dispute between China and Taiwan, he invites charges of using force with little apparent strategic consistency. According to its own lights, however, the administration's record of using force makes all the sense in the world. In the neoliberal view, to permit instability is to put the international economy and by extension the U.S. economy at risk—hence the alacrity with which President Clinton dispatches American soldiers to police, punish, and pacify.

The likelihood that these constabulary burdens are likely to prove permanent, not to mention enormously costly in material and human terms, is the dirty little secret of neoliberalism's furtive hegemony. As Benjamin Schwarz has observed, the very "logic of economic interdependence leads to a proliferation of American 'security' commitments in what all agree is an unstable world order." This, writes Schwarz, leads to the "dismal conclusion" that "America's worldwide security commitments are a truly permanent burden."

Furthermore, the heightened military activism and new security obligations undertaken by the Clinton Administration and its immediate predecessor (not untainted by neoliberalism) suggest the contradictions that this approach to policy invites. Thus, in the Persian Gulf, where an American-led coalition intervenes to punish one autocrat for disrupting the status quo, U.S. forces remain to protect other autocrats committed to preserving it, with our friends in the region hardly more interested in human rights or democracy than our adversaries. In Somalia, where American soldiers arrive to succor the starving, they stay on to kill women and children in bloody street fighting. In Haiti, where the United States intervenes to restore democracy, despots in tropical suits supplant despots in uniform and democracy remains nowhere to be seen. In Bosnia, where genocide creates a moral imperative for action, the United States and its allies deem it inexpedient even to detain the perpetrators of ghastly war crimes. Then there are the Kurds: having led an emergency effort to rescue them in 1991, the United States of late turns a blind eye as Turks and Iraqis take turns pummeling the erstwhile subjects of American solicitude. Finally, there is the matter of proliferation: standing in the forefront of global efforts to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons, the United States simultaneously floods the international market with top-quality conventional weapons, far outselling all other rivals as arms merchant to the world.

Further compromising the integrity of this neoliberal version of American hegemony is the character of modern liberalism itself. The compensatory rewards that neoliberals proffer to those who abide by the rules of the United States are as likely to inspire loathing as to command respect. In its favor, as Irving Kristol notes, the Pax Americana "lacks the brute coercion that characterized European imperialism. But it also lacks the authentic missionary spirit of that older imperialism." At most, continues Kristol, the American empire promises the world "a growth economy, a 'consumerist' society, popular elections, and a dominant secular-hedonistic ethos. It is a combination that is hard to resist—and equally hard to respect in its populist vulgarity. It is an imperium with a minimum of moral substance." While the people of the world may find the allure of American popular culture momentarily irresistible, "one wonders how soon they will weary of it."

Not, one hopes, before the American people weary of it first. Indeed, the inadequacies of neoliberalism, particularly as a response to any but the basest human aspirations, loom so large as to offer at least some solace: in the end, neoliberalism will discredit itself. When that occurs, Americans may well disenthrall themselves of the diplomatic formula that neoliberals have devised to prop up their dubious endeavor.

By comparison, contemporary American conservatism, whatever its idiosyncrasies and wayward tendencies, at least sees the human person as something more that the sum of his or her appetites. Recognizing the fact of original sin, conservatives are also certain that a profound discontent forms an indelible part of human nature. At its best, the conservative movement seeks to restore to the United States the ordered liberty that permits citizens to address that discontent by aspiring to genuinely worthy pursuits.

Yet neoconservatives believe in the possibility of greatness not only for individuals, but for nations as well. Viewing (with considerable justification) the outcome of the Cold War as a matter of personal vindication, neoconservatives remain dazzled by the results of their exertions. Success against communism has fostered the belief that for America the mantle of greatness lies in underwriting the world's progress toward democracy everywhere. There is, in this self-prescribed obligation to light the lamp of liberty around the globe, vaulting ambition, no small amount of arrogance, and real potential for jingoism. But there is also idealism and high-mindedness. For these very reasons the neoconservative prescription for American hegemony cannot be dismissed lightly. For those same reasons, it may prove to be a singularly reckless proposition.

The neoconservative prescription for American hegemony is defective on two counts. First, it over-

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states the impact of democratization on the character of peoples and the behavior of nations. Second, it underestimates the obstacles that an American-sponsored campaign of global democratization must overcome. Ironically, in the latter case, neoconservatives—righteous combatants in the ongoing culture war—err because they misconstrue the true extent of the cultural crisis that has befallen the West.

For neoconservatives, democratization comprises the Big Scorecard of foreign policy, the authoritative measure of America's progress in setting the world right. A nation that adopts popular government takes its place among the elect. Nations languishing in tyranny or wallowing in disorder remain on the wrong side of the ledger. Yet only for the moment: neoconservatives assume that progress toward democracy—given a generous American nudge—is virtually inevitable. Once having become democratic, a nation is presumed also to become peaceful, with the expectation that it will conform thereafter to the rules of behavior prescribed by the benign hegemon.

This curiously generic view of democracy admits to little variation in the actual practice of self-government among different countries. Furthermore, it implies that particular habits of political practice diminish or seal the wellsprings of collective disenchantment, antipathy, and ambition, feeding the idea that the citizens of democratic nations are inherently given to living in peace with their neighbors. The history of the United States itself would suggest that this bit of conventional wisdom does not stand up to close scrutiny. As Fareed Zakaria has observed in a recent issue of *Foreign Affairs,* democracies can, in fact, be "illiberal." In certain circumstances, the concomitance of newly formed democratic governments is likely to be "hyper-nationalism and warmongering."

More specifically, the frequently heard assertion that democracies do not wage war against one another is dubious in the extreme. One need not be a diehard believer in the Lost Cause to acknowledge that the Confederate States of America constituted a genuine, if deeply flawed, democracy, pitted in one of the fiercest of modern wars against another genuine (although imperfect) democracy. Similarly, if universal manhood suffrage, an elected legislature exercising real authority, and adherence to the rule of law are marks of democracy, then in 1914 Germany no less than France or Great Britain deserved to be classified as democratic. Furthermore, the historical record includes several confrontations in which democracies narrowly averted war—the escape having nothing to do with common devotion to democratic practice. Consider, for example, the Fashoda incident of 1898 involving Britain and France or the Ruhr crisis of 1923 involving France and Germany. In short, neoconservative predictions that a democratic world will culminate in a Kantian perpetual peace, with the costs of sustaining American hegemony being correspondingly slight, deserve to be treated skeptically.

Moreover, if neoconservatives overstate the benefits that will flow from democratization, they likewise tend to exaggerate the ease with which democracy will expand its hold. Without doubt, people around the world thirst for freedom and authentic self-government. Equally without doubt, the obstacles to satisfying that thirst loom large. When it comes to nurturing the spread of democratic institutions, none of the three areas in which the United States today is especially dominant—military might, mastery of the so-called information revolution, and the "soft power" of pop culture and lifestyle—are likely to be decisive. In the end, values will count most.

Yet as conservatives above all understand, the United States has a problem with values. Americans are no longer quite sure what they ought to believe or what their nation stands for. As the sludge of multiculturalism seeps from the academy into everyday life, national identity becomes a cause for remorse or self-flagellation rather than a source of inspiration, collective self-confidence lapses, and moral certitude gives way to doubt and bewilderment. The politics of race, gender, and ethnicity demolish claims regarding the dignity of the individual, distorting beyond recognition the traditional American concept of equality. The insistence upon unfettered self-gratification tears at the basic structure of the family, sowing confusion about the most intimate human relationships.

In other words, the challenge that neoconservatives face in constructing their benign global order is that they must do so in the teeth of an intellectual climate that is deeply and resolutely hostile. Derisive of everything that conservatives hold dear, those who control our key cultural institutions will bitterly oppose any enterprise that assigns to the United States the "moral supremacy and moral confidence" that William Kristol and Robert Kagan identify as the essential underpinnings of American hegemony. After the crimes of slavery and racism, they say, after the mistreatment of Native Americans, the systematic oppression of women, the cruelties inflicted on gays and lesbians, who are Americans to pronounce judgment? Who are we to censure others? Sadly, the longer we ingest the fumes of cultural and moral relativism, the more difficult it becomes to persuade even ourselves that we can rightfully claim—indeed, at times ought to assert—such prerogatives.

Elsewhere in the world, those hostile to democracy (and to American hegemony) delight in our confusion and turn it to their own advantage. Their arguments seemingly legitimized by Western intellectuals contemptuous of the West and all its works, proponents of radical Islam and of "Asian values" mock American presumptuousness in admonishing others on matters such as community or respect for human life.

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Thus, neoconservative advocacy of a campaign for global democratization implies a struggle fought on two fronts, one external and one domestic. A two-front war is a fundamentally risky venture, inviting over-extension, exhaustion, and premature decline. In this instance, with the people perplexed and our adversaries deeply entrenched and cunning, the correlation of forces is hardly promising. Thus, however insistent the neoconservative demand that the United States seize this particular moment to embark upon a democratic crusade, conditions for doing so are not especially auspicious. When facing multiple adversaries, sound strategy requires the designation of a main effort. Prudence dictates attending to the more dangerous foe first—which is why conservatives would do well to defer any new crusades abroad until they have turned the tide in the culture war at home.

VI

However much neoliberals and neoconservatives may monopolize the current foreign policy debate, the schools of thought that they represent do not exhaust the range of possibilities available to the United States. Realism offers a third—and in every respect preferable—approach for guiding the policies of the world's only superpower.

Herbert Butterfield once observed that realism tends to be a boast rather than a philosophy. More commonly in American political circles, realism has been an epithet. To the extent that it conjures up images of Machiavelli or Metternich, Americans dismiss realism as amoral and cynical. Yet the United States can draw on a specifically American realist tradition that is not synonymous with realpolitik. It is this American tradition—the tradition of Reinhold Niebuhr, Walter Lippmann, and Hans Morgenthau—that offers an alternative to the flawed visions of neoliberals and neoconservatives.

Realism is not a cover for isolationism. The realist acknowledges the existence of an American imperium, although perhaps viewing it as, at best, a mixed blessing. If doubtful that empire—even "empire by invitation"—is entirely conducive to the well-being of American democracy, the realist nonetheless recognizes that the issue of whether or not to accept hegemonic responsibilities is moot. For the United States, there is no going back. Having mounted the tiger, we cannot easily dismount.

The American realist tradition in fact furnishes the surest guide for enabling the United States to sustain its preponderant position while avoiding the vanity and hubris that Morgenthau has identified as "the poisonous fruits of power." Realism does not provide a formula for policy prescription, but it does offer criteria for analyzing policy alternatives. In contrast to the tawdriness and dishonesty of neoliberalism, realism offers directness and consistency. In place of the illusions and improvidence to which neoconservatism is prone, it requires the careful calibration of means with ends. Realism guards against a nation's reach exceeding its grasp, precluding the "insolvency" that Lippmann cited as the defect to which American statecraft in this century has been peculiarly susceptible. It recognizes the wisdom of Lippmann's dictum that sound policy "has been formed only when commitments and power have been brought into balance." Above all, for conservatives who believe that the character of a nation counts for more than the expanse of its empire, realism allows for the responsible exercise of power abroad while accepting the primacy of efforts to revitalize the culture at home.

The realist vision is modest in scope and ambition. Wilson's ultimate triumph over Lenin has revived American dreams of "managing history." Niebuhr's call for Americans to disavow such dreams, voiced nearly a half century ago, has today acquired renewed relevance. "The course of history cannot be coerced," he warns, "in accordance with a particular conception of its ends." That our own particular conception of politics has prevailed over various perverse alternatives is cause for celebration, but the realist knows that even that large success leaves much unsettled. Tying up history's loose ends does not lie within the power of the United States, however energetically it may exert itself. Democratic capitalism, as it has evolved in the American setting, is unlikely to respond fully to the aspirations of peoples around the world. Understanding that, in Niebuhr's words, "the whole drama of history is enacted in a frame of meaning too large for human comprehension," realism accepts the imperative of humility.

Thus, for the realist, the obligation of a great power is not to embark upon crusades but to pursue its interests. If defined with sufficient breadth and imagination, those interests will likewise respond to the minimal requirements of others, permitting the creation of an equilibrium that, however precarious, may approximate peace. Indeed, only then can the expenditure of power be said to satisfy the truest interests of the United States itself.

The realist knows that the exercise of power involves moral hazards. For an imperial republic in particular, charting a course of action that is both responsible and moral will provide a source of continuing challenge. The realist accepts Niebuhr's maxim that for a great nation "it is not possible to be both pure and responsible." In the formulation of policy, observes Morgenthau, "moral principles can never be fully realized, but must at best be approximated." Knowing this, the realist shoulders the burdens of power with more resignation than enthusiasm. "Power," advises Niebuhr, "ought always to be exercised with a certain uneasiness of conscience."

Wary of claims of American exceptionalism, the realist understands that the United States is intrinsi-

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cally neither more nor less virtuous than other nations that have wielded great authority in the past. As a result, for a democratic hegemon, the crucial function of those outside of government is to challenge claims by agencies of state power that their motives and actions are intrinsically righteous. "Powerful men and nations," warns Niebuhr, "are in greater peril from their own illusions than from their neighbors' hostile designs." For the world's only superpower, the most pernicious illusion may well be to cling uncritically to the myth of its own uniqueness, innocence, and moral superiority. Taken not only as an explanation for past success but as a "permanent quality," writes Morgenthau, that alleged moral superiority seemingly "justifies the national claim to be the lawgiver and arbiter of mankind." The unhappy result may be to lure an overconfident and unsuspecting people "to jump into the abyss as if it were the consummation of their dreams."

A century-long effort to secure acceptance of American revolutionary ideals has culminated in spectacular vindication. Having labored so assiduously to make its imprint on the world, the United States cannot withdraw from the leading role it has taken on in international affairs. Indeed, those who prattle about the dangers of isolationism only divert attention from more pressing concerns. Yet if the United States cannot divorce itself from the world, neither can it indulge in utopian dreams that fuel expectations of sustaining American dominance on the cheap. Neither the process of economic globalization nor continuing efforts to spread democracy will free the United States from its vexing and morally perilous responsibilities. The position to which America has ascended demands that we shed our outmoded pretensions of republican innocence and accept the necessity henceforth of living with an uneasy conscience. FT

The Waltz We Were Born For

Wind chimes ping and tangle on the patio.
In gusty winds this wild, sparrow hawks hover
and bob—always the crash of indigo
hosannas dangling on strings. My wife ties copper
to turquoise from deserts, and bits of steel
from engines I tear down. She strings them all
like laces of babies' shoes when the squeal
of their play made joyful noise in the hall.

Her voice is more modest than moonlight,
like pearl drops she wears in her lobes.
My hands find the face of my bride.
I stretch her skin smooth and see bone.
Our children bring children to bless her, her face
more weathered than mine. What matters
is timeless, dazzling devotion—not rain,
not Eden gardenias, but cactus in drought,
not just moons of deep sleep, not sunlight or stars,
not the blue, but the darkness beyond.

Walt McDonald

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The Ways We Worship

Avery Dulles

One weekend in that tumultuous year 1968 I was on call at a parish church outside of Baltimore. At the end of my Sunday Mass I came into the body of the church to make my thanksgiving, and as I knelt in the pew I noticed that the pulpit from which I had preached had on its front a banner with the inscription "God is other people." If I had had a magic marker within reach, I would not have been able to resist the temptation to insert a comma after the word "other."

The two forms of the inscription, with and without the comma, sum up two opposed tendencies in contemporary liturgical piety. For present purposes I shall call them otherworldly and this-worldly. For the sake of clarity I shall draw the contrast rather baldly, verging on caricature, while recognizing that less extreme positions are more normal. My immediate concern is with the Catholic situation, but I believe that my arguments apply, mutatis mutandis, in other Christian traditions as well.

For the otherworldly Catholic, liturgy is made in heaven. Given by God, it is received by the Church, which has no power to make substantive changes or substitutions. The ritual is sacred and inviolable. The faithful of any age or place must adapt themselves to it, rather than adapting it to their tastes, interests, or capacities. The celebration should elicit a sense of numinous awe in the presence of the holy, the totally other. God is remote, utterly transcendent, and we sinners are unworthy to stand in his presence. Liturgy is the principal bond between the earthly and the heavenly Church, a frail human participation in the glorious heavenly liturgy. In its official worship the Church achieves its prime purpose, to glorify God. There is no need for the words and gestures to be understood by the members of the assembly.

For the this-worldly believer, on the contrary, successful liturgical practice is a matter of feeling and self-expression. When the community assembles, it should celebrate its religious experience, thereby intensifying and solidifying it. The worshipers may be confident that as they seek to do so they will be assisted by the indwelling Spirit and will be constituted as Church.

In this second perspective, the members of the assembly are urged to find God not in some supercelestial realm beyond space and time, but here and now in the members themselves. Liturgy, it is held, exists for the sake of the worshipers, and only by helping them to sort out their experience and to become "fully alive" does it glorify God. The style of worship is to be tailored to the particular community so that the worshipers may be motivated to build the Kingdom of God here on earth.

To point up the contrast one may say that in the first view, the liturgy makes the Church and in the second, the Church makes the liturgy. In the first view the members of the Church simply receive what the liturgy has to give. The conduct of the ceremony is entrusted to a divinely ordained hierarchical priesthood, which has responsibility for the strict observance of the prescribed rites. In the second view, the liturgy is produced by the people. The congregation is the responsible agent, and the ministers its delegated representatives. In the first view the sacraments are efficacious *ex opere operato;* in the second, *ex opere operantis.* In the first view the attention of the assembly is directed to the objective mystery of God's saving work in Christ; in the second view, worship must be made relevant to the actual situation. In the style of worship, the first favors formality, the second spontaneity.

The two points of view clash on any number of issues that have been hotly disputed in the past

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thirty years. For example, there are problems about the design and furnishings of the space. Should there be a sanctuary, an altar rail, a prominent tabernacle, sacred images? Should the people be seated in pews with kneelers, or in chairs arranged in a crescent or circle? How should the ministers be vested? Should the celebrant face the people during the Eucharistic prayer, or should both priests and people be turned eastward toward the coming Lord?

There are further disagreements about bows, genuflections, and the proper posture for Holy Communion. Should the communicants stand or kneel? Should they receive in the hand or on the tongue? Should Holy Communion be preceded by a confession of sins and fasting? Should the reserved sacrament be adored? Should it be exposed for veneration? Should lay people, including women, be allowed to minister at the altar and distribute Holy Communion?

Other debates revolve more about the service of the word. Should the rite begin with an informal greeting? Should the homily be an authoritative word or a sharing of personal faith experiences? Are dialogue homilies permissible? Should the celebrant be bound strictly to the approved texts or be encouraged to extemporize? Should preference be given to the Roman canon above the other authorized eucharistic prayers? Should the use of Latin in the Roman rite be maintained, increased, or eliminated altogether? What principles should govern the translations of the sacramentary and the lectionary into English?

It would be possible to lengthen this list considerably by speaking about other matters, for example, sacred music. What of Gregorian chant, polyphony, and country music? What of pipe organs and guitars? These and other areas of controversy are all too familiar to most worshipers.

There is, in all this, great potential for polarization. Liturgy is a flash point in the culture wars. Partisans of the two tendencies frequently criticize each other in harsh and polemical terms. The advocates of otherworldly liturgy accuse their adversaries of destroying the sense of the sacred, of departing from Catholic tradition, and of lapsing into a vapid congregationalism. The this-worldly school accuses its opponents of turning the Church into a museum piece, of perpetuating a mythical worldview, and of resisting the reforms of the Second Vatican Council.

Each party blames the other for the decline of Mass attendance and the failure of the Church to attract the young. One group holds that modern Catholics are disgusted by the tasteless experiments and pedestrian language currently in use; the other insists that the laity are repelled by a petrified liturgy that is tied to a vanished civilization and removes the Church from active participation in the modern world.

Needless to say, the actual positions of most Catholics do not correspond precisely to either of these two types. An extremist at the otherworldly end of the spectrum would probably join some "traditionalist" movement like that of Marcel Lefebvre and thus end up outside the Catholic Church. An extreme this-worldly outlook would take a person along the path followed by Matthew Fox, who left the Catholic communion because he found it unreceptive to "creative spirituality."

The extreme positions, nevertheless, have a certain inner consistency. The mediating positions, in comparison with them, tend to be weak compromises. Those who elect to stand nearer to the center risk incurring the wrath of both extremes. "Would that you were either hot or cold," they say. Must a mediating position, in seeking to do justice to both sides, be a bag of contradictions that in the end satisfies no one?

I propose that we look to tradition as a principle of discernment in sorting out these matters. That proposal, I realize, is not without difficulty. The term "tradition" might seem to be unsuitable for mediation because it has already been coopted by extreme conservatives, who use it, as did Lefebvre, to denounce even the moderate reforms of Vatican II.

Tradition, however, need not be understood in traditionalist terms. Some liberals have held that Vatican II overcame a rigid, ossified concept of tradition and made it possible to understand tradition in a new light, as a principle of growth and change. This response, however, raises yet another difficulty. The concept of tradition, some object, can be of no help because the battles about tradition simply reproduce on another level the battles about liturgy itself. To invoke tradition is to shift to a new battlefield no more promising than the first.

While recognizing the force of this objection, I would refuse to surrender without an effort. It is possible, I believe, to show that the concept of tradition, as understood in common speech, in biblical usage, and in normative Christian documents, is not so arbitrary. It implies at least three things—a giver, a gift, and a recipient. Tradition passes on some reality or idea between two poles. The content (or the *traditum*) is that which the giver has to give and the receiver can receive. By its very nature, therefore, tradition mediates between two extremes, bringing them into unity.

Tradition, insofar as it takes place in history, binds together past and future. It has been called the living past. Jaroslav Pelikan brilliantly clarified the difference between tradition and traditionalism when he called tradition "the living faith of the dead" and traditionalism "the dead faith of the living." If the gift perishes in the process of transmission, it becomes the dead past, a mere memory. The faith of the dead, if it is to live, must take root in the minds and hearts of those who receive it. Thus tradition, by its very nature, demands attention to the recipient as well as to the gift and the giver.

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Liturgy and tradition are not synonyms, but they are closely connected. Tradition is more extensive than liturgy, since, even in the Church, there are other forms of tradition—devotional, doctrinal, catechetical, spiritual, and canonical. Liturgy, however, is recognized as a prime instance of tradition. It was described by Bishop Bossuet as "the principal instrument of the Church's tradition." According to Dom Prosper Guéranger, one of the founders of the modern liturgical movement, "the liturgy is tradition itself, at its highest power and solemnity." Yves Congar makes these words his own and affirms that "liturgy is the privileged locus of tradition, not only from the point of view of conservation and preservation, but also from that of progress or development." What is true of tradition must therefore hold for liturgy. Although liturgy does not coincide with the entirety of the Christian life, the whole life of the Christian should be permeated by the spirit of the liturgy.

Liturgy is described in official documents as the Church's prolongation of, and participation in, Christ's priestly office. This description is valid so far as it goes, but I regard it as incomplete. In the liturgy, as the public action (*leitourgia*) of the Church as such, Christ exercises his threefold office as prophet, priest, and king. In celebrating the liturgy the Church participates in the worship offered by Jesus and at the same time proclaims God's wonderful works and furthers the establishment of the Kingdom. Insofar as it is worship, liturgy has a priestly aspect, but it is not reducible to worship alone. Under a second aspect it is a participation in the prophetic office of Christ, who addresses his people by word and gesture. Under still a third aspect, thanks to the active presence of the risen Christ and the Holy Spirit, liturgy serves to transform the old world into the new creation. It gives fresh actuality to the fruits of Christ's Paschal mystery.

The concept of tradition, as currently understood in theology, includes a number of characteristics that might be significant for the reform and renewal of the liturgy. Presupposing a more thorough study of tradition that cannot be repeated here, I shall briefly summarize ten of these characteristics.

1. Tradition has a divine origin. God is the principal transmitter, the first *tradens* or *traditor*. Christian tradition arises from the action by which the Father handed over his Son for the redemption of the world (Romans 8:32; John 3:16). Without this initiative of the Father everything else in Christian tradition would collapse.

When God acts in history, he does not act alone, but makes use of human agency. Mary, Judas, Pilate, and Jesus in his humanity were involved in very different ways as instruments in bringing about God's supreme redemptive act.

2. Tradition is Christic. Christ goes willingly to his death, surrendering himself for our redemption. Even before his betrayer turned him over to his enemies, Jesus gave himself to his disciples with his own hands. He really hands himself over under the appearances of bread and wine, broken and poured out for our salvation. He instructs the disciples to take, eat, and drink, thus completing the ritual transaction. Having united the disciples to himself, Jesus sends them into the world to proclaim his message and carry on his ministry.

3. Tradition in the theological sense is also pneumatic. Bowing his head before he died, Jesus handed over the Spirit (John 19:30). In a later incident, when the risen Jesus breathes upon the apostles, their reception of the Spirit is mentioned (John 20:23). From these texts in combination it seems clear that the sending of the Spirit into the hearts of the faithful pertains constitutively to tradition in its theological meaning.

Because of this pneumatic dimension, tradition in the Church is normally epicletic. At the liturgy, at councils, and on other solemn occasions, where the tradition has to be authoritatively passed on, the Church invokes the Holy Spirit, through whom the living Christ continues to give himself actively to the Church. Thanks to the involvement of the Holy Spirit, tradition has a living actuality that prevents it from being a mere hearkening back to the past. Congar has written many pages on the Holy Spirit as "the transcendent subject of tradition." The Orthodox theologian Vladimir Lossky defines tradition as "the life of the Holy Spirit in the Church."

To summarize these first three points we may say that tradition in the theological sense, and hence in the liturgy also, is trinitarian. In the words of Jean Corbon, "The Father gives himself through his Son in his Holy Spirit." In a fuller explication he writes:

> The passionate love of the Father for human beings (John 3:16) reaches its climax in the passion of his Son and is henceforth poured out by his Spirit in the divine compassion at the heart of the world, that is, in the Church. And the mystery of tradition is this joint mission of the Word and the Spirit throughout the economy of salvation; now, in the last times, all the torrents of love that pour from the Spirit of Jesus flow together in the great river of life that is the liturgy.

4. Tradition in its Christian reality is apostolic. The traditionary acts of the divine persons are prolonged and concretized in history by the actions of the apostles and their successors, who pass on the living memory of the Paschal mystery in the normative language of Scripture and the early creeds. Paul reports that he has received from the Lord and passed on to the Corinthians the narrative of the institution of the Eucharist (1 Corinthians 11:23). A little later in

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the same letter Paul uses once more the technical language of tradition (1 Corinthians 15:3) as giving authority to his account of the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. The kerygma is not a private message; it is the revelation entrusted to the apostolic body.

The apostolic tradition at its core is liturgical, as the example of the Eucharist serves to indicate. Baptism, likewise, is a prime instance of tradition. By the passing on of the creed the bishop entrusts to the candidate the heritage of the Church, and by echoing the creed the candidate gives assurance that he or she possesses the faith necessary to become a bearer of the tradition.

5. Tradition takes place through symbolic acts and gestures as much as through words. The sacrament of baptism has been called "the kerygma in action." The mystery of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection is transmitted by the immersion of the candidate into the baptismal waters. The use of specially blessed water recalls Old Testament events such as the Flood, the crossing of the Red Sea, and the striking of the rock by Moses (1 Corinthians 10:1-4; 1 Peter 3:20-21) as well as Jesus' own baptism in the Jordan. More proximately the immersion recalls the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord. The threefold immersion transforms the rite into a proclamation of the Triune God, according to the baptismal precept of Matthew 28:20. Having been washed in the blood of the Lamb, the neophytes don the white garments of righteousness (Revelation 7:14), thus signifying their induction into the new creation. At the Eucharist, likewise, the action proclaims the death of the Lord with a view to his glorious return (1 Corinthians 11:26). The offering of the elements, the breaking of the host, and the eating and drinking are charged with Christological meaning.

Vatican II mentioned worship as one of the means by which the Church "perpetuates and hands on to every generation all that she is and all that she believes." In the liturgy, as elsewhere, Maurice Blondel's observation holds:

> Tradition in the Church will, thus, not be just a few unwritten truths transmitted by word of mouth, but in a quite special way the Church's ordinary life, its way of acting, its structures, discipline, sacraments, prayer, its faith as lived through the centuries.

For the process of tradition to succeed in its liturgical enactment the participants themselves must be actively engaged. James Hitchcock has made the point effectively:

> Habits of prayer and devotion are fostered and kept alive not only through verbal or mental prayer but also through what might be called "muscular memories"—familiar ritual gestures which summon up for the actor a range of implicit beliefs. Genuflecting before a tabernacle or making the sign of the cross with holy water on entering a church are examples of this. So also is the fingering of rosary beads. Such actions have religious meaning even without conscious reflection, because they operate on a deeper level of the mind.

6. The preferred language of tradition is itself suggestive and symbolic. Jesus taught not so much by clear doctrinal declarations as by stories, parables, and symbolic actions. In the New Testament as well as in the Old, faith is transmitted through "songs, hymns, and inspired canticles" (Colossians 3:16). Scholars have judged that many of the great Christological hymns in the Pauline letters, in the Letter to the Hebrews, in John's Gospel, and in the Revelation of John have their matrix in the liturgy. Pliny in his letter to Trajan informs the emperor that the Christians at their liturgy were singing hymns to Christ as to a god. The ancient creeds fitted into the liturgy because they were rhythmic, poetic, and able to be sung. The same cannot be said of the creeds of later centuries, when rationalism began to affect the processes by which faith was transmitted. While an element of rationality is appropriate for doctrinal teaching, the liturgy should cultivate the suggestive power of tradition.

If faith could be communicated by merely conceptual indoctrination, living tradition would hardly be necessary. But, as Blondel effectively showed, propositional statements do not suffice. "Tradition," he says, "is not a simple substitute for a written teaching. It has a different purpose. . . . It preserves not so much the intellectual aspect of the past as its living reality." In times of crisis, the Church can turn to her tradition to discover elements previously held back in the depths of her unconscious and practiced rather than expressed and systematized. The fallacy of explicitness, as Hitchcock remarks, "has been responsible for much liturgical impoverishment, since some liturgists (and some worshipers) appeared to assume that once the symbols had been 'explained' there was no longer any need for them."

7. Tradition is transformative. Transmitted predominantly by symbolic actions and symbolic language, it acts on the psyche at a level more fundamental than reflective consciousness. In this way it helps to transform the believer into a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17; cf. Galatians 6:15)—a person who thinks, feels, speaks, and acts in new ways. Tradition instills in the community an instinctive sense of the faith.

The spontaneous practices and popular devotions of the faithful, while they lack the high authority that belongs to liturgy, constitute subsidiary avenues of tradition, reflecting the people's sense of the faith. While popular religiosity must be critically evaluated for its authenticity, it will be carefully studied by

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the Church's pastors for its hidden riches. Before defining dogmas such as the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption, the popes consulted the sense of the faithful as manifested in devotional traditions.

Modernism exaggerated the authority of popular devotions, placing them on a par with liturgy as a locus of tradition. But in classical theology the *lex orandi* did not refer to spontaneous manifestations of popular piety but rather to the authorized liturgy of the Church as a whole.

8. Tradition is never static. Blondel protested that the sacred deposit is not an aerolith to be preserved in a glass case but a living and developing organism. Vatican II declared: "The tradition that comes from the apostles develops in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. . . . For, as the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the words of God reach their fulfillment in her." Writing after the Council, Henri de Lubac agreed. "Tradition," he said, "according to the Fathers of the Church, is in fact just the opposite of a burden of the past: it is a vital energy, a propulsive as much as a protective force."

Tradition, however, does not grow by sudden leaps and does not radically reverse itself. It develops organically by successive and almost imperceptible modifications. Drastic innovation and abrupt change are antithetical to the genius of tradition and therefore also repugnant to liturgy as a prime instance of tradition.

9. In order to develop along the line of its original inspiration, tradition returns continually to its sources. As critics of art and literature often remark, creativity even in the secular sphere is enhanced by fidelity to traditions handed down from the past. The same is true a fortiori in the theological order, because tradition is the transmission of a divine revelation enshrined in inspired sources. Christian tradition draws its undying vitality from the power of the sources to disclose more than had previously been tapped. Reading sacred Scripture with the help of the same Spirit who inspired it, the Church finds new light for dealing with present problems. In this way Jesus fulfills his promise that the Paraclete would lead the disciples forward into the fullness of truth (John 16:13).

The continued vitality of the Christian sources manifests itself with special force in the liturgy, which is a memorial of the Paschal event. Liturgical worship, according to Frans Jozef van Beeck, is the activity in which "the Church draws closest to the mystery at its center." In the ministry of word and sacrament Christ is present with singular power and density, bringing the faithful into direct contact with the redemptive mystery.

10. Tradition points forward to the Eschaton. Whereas tradition in its merely human aspect has a necessary reference to the past, Christian tradition has a future reference as well. It transmits the mystery of Christ, who is the Omega as well as the Alpha. It communicates the Holy Spirit, who is the eschatological gift. By receiving Christian tradition we are claimed for the Kingdom of God, inasmuch as the Church on earth is "the initial budding forth of the Kingdom." The more deeply we immerse ourselves in the tradition, the more ineluctably are we borne toward the promised fullness of the Kingdom.

This eschatological aspect of tradition is verified eminently in the worship of the Church, which Vatican II described as a foretaste of the heavenly liturgy. It summons believers to look forward to Christ's return in glory, bringing the Church to its consummation. The Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemann has made this point emphatically. The essential function of the liturgy, for him, is "to *realize* the Church by revealing her (to herself and to the world) as the epiphany of the Kingdom of God." The Church, since it belongs to the age to come, has as its proper function to bear witness to "the Eschaton—the Lordship of Christ until he comes." Something of this same cosmic and eschatological perspective comes through in the passionate, contorted prose of Teilhard de Chardin, when he writes, for example, of "The Mass on the World." Inspired by the ancient sources, Teilhard was able to perceive the Eucharist as an anticipatory sign of the eschatologically transformed universe.

These observations on tradition do not by themselves settle the debated questions about liturgy, but they provide some principles governing the reform and renewal of the Church's official worship. To indicate some possible applications let me draw eight corollaries from what has already been said.

1. Liturgy is God's gift before it is a human response. It is not something we freely construct according to our own ideas and preferences. As a preeminent form of tradition, it derives from the activity of God through Christ and the apostles. In the liturgy God turns to us, and we receive what he is pleased to give, especially the central mystery of our redemption through Jesus Christ.

2. In liturgy, as in other spheres of tradition, attention must be directed primarily to the reality that is transmitted. The symbols do not function rightly unless they focus our attention on their joint meaning. In this way it makes present the mystery of our redemption, which is too great to be contained in any words or symbols, but is communicated through them as instruments of the Holy Spirit. Liturgy celebrates the *mysterion* in a public way, in the context of new situations. The context, however, must not be allowed to become the theme, lest the liturgy cease to function as tradition.

3. In order to bring about interior union with the mystery being celebrated in it, liturgy should prayerfully invoke the Holy Spirit. Where this invocation is

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omitted, a false impression of human autonomy can easily arise. The symbols could be misinterpreted or manipulated according to an alien spirit.

4. Making use of its symbolic resources, liturgy should arouse a keen awareness of the truths of faith. Gestures such as the elevation of the host, bows, and genuflections convey the sense of the divine presence more powerfully than does explicit statement. For the dignity and public character of the liturgy, ritual gestures, vestments, sacred song, and periods of silence should be built into the conduct of worship. In the spoken parts of the liturgy, the language, as I have said, should be suggestive and not overly didactic.

5. Liturgy should be participatory in the sense that it induces the worshipers to interiorize the meanings it conveys and to make personal acts of faith, hope, and love. Vital participation in the mystery of redemption is enhanced by song, gesture, and movement on the part of the congregation. There is no need to choose between the objectivity of the given and the subjectivity of the response. The fidelity of the objective presentation enhances the depth and transformative quality of the response.

6. Pertaining as it does to divine and apostolic tradition, liturgy should be marked by stability. According to Vatican II, it should not be changed without real and manifest necessity. But it should not be static any more than tradition is. Its forms of expression should always take account of the needs and capacities of the worshiping community.

Adaptation does not mean, to be sure, that everything should be stated in plain vernacular English or conducted in a tone of familiarity. On the contrary, attention to the laws of worship may require a certain formality in style and language somewhat removed from ordinary speech. The need to evoke the sense of the sacred may also call for types of chant not heard in secular situations.

7. Because liturgy, like tradition in general, is a living reality, no one stage of its development should be absolutized. As Vatican II declared, undesirable accretions and anachronisms should be removed. Neither the fourth century, nor the thirteenth, nor the era of Trent, nor that of Vatican II represents the unsurpassable high point. Cardinal Ratzinger remarks that since the liturgy is alive, "the Missal can no more be mummified than the Church herself."

Changes in the liturgy should, however, be gradual and organic. Possibly the new texts prepared after Vatican II departed too abruptly from recent tradition and were too harshly imposed. However that may be, these texts have by now won for themselves a certain right of existence. The Catholic faithful have became familiar with them. To banish them and demand a return to preconciliar texts could only provoke further disorientation and turmoil. The first requirement is for a more reverent and sensitive use of the texts and rubrics that we now have.

Since Vatican II much energy has gone into the composition of new liturgical texts, many of them unauthorized. The multiplication of new texts can easily become a distraction. It might be best for the present sacramentary to be kept in place for a reasonable period of years, with improved translations and minor corrections. In a highly secular society such as our own, attempts to compose sacred texts will often be less than successful.

8. The existing liturgy provides no lack of room for creativity, rightly understood. The choice of music, the preparation of the liturgical space, the composition of the homily and the intercessions all place heavy demands on the talents of those concerned. Spontaneity in formal liturgical celebrations should, however, be kept within bounds. Liturgy, as the chief embodiment of perennial tradition, should convey a sense of the objective, the constant, and the universal.

In this essay I may seem to have gravitated toward the otherworldly pole described at the start. If so, it is because liturgy is the principal bearer of a tradition that comes down without a break from Christ and the apostles, and is normative for the universal Church. As the most formal and public manifestation of tradition, liturgy calls attention to the objectively given, which remains the source of salvation everywhere and for all. It seeks to impart a sense of the divine and to bring the worshiper into the great mystery of our redemption.

Liturgy, however, is not the entire life of the Church. Other forms of traditional and spontaneous worship deserve to be encouraged. In private prayer and popular devotions the particular cultures and customs of diverse peoples, and their present concerns, can find suitable expression. Informality and originality may be encouraged in spontaneous prayer groups, processions, local shrines, popular religious art and music, family devotions, and the like.

The current crisis in liturgy, it would appear, is due in part to the withering away of various nonliturgical styles of piety (such as novena prayers, parish missions, eucharistic adoration, and the rosary) that sustained the faith and commitment of Catholics in the centuries before the Second Vatican Council. After the Council it became common to think that since the liturgy was central, all worship ought to be liturgical, even eucharistic. In the absence of alternatives, celebrants were tempted to bring an informal and spontaneous style into liturgy itself. Some priests seemed to be imitating popular entertainers and talk show hosts to the detriment of the solemnity and formality that by right pertained to liturgy. By promoting a revival of non-eucharistic and paraliturgical forms of piety and instruction, the Church could, I believe, help to safeguard the distinctive values of liturgical worship.

The total worship of the Church, we may say, includes both the formal and the informal. The two

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are dialectically related. Though not the same, they should reinforce each other. Liturgy, as formal worship, should always have a point of contact with the experience of the community lest it become sterile. Private devotions, though they emanate from popular experience, should always be kept in line with the objective form of revelation lest they become superstitious. But the proportions vary. Liturgy keeps the focus on the exalted mystery of the Transcendent, whereas popular piety gives greater attention to God's accessibility in the here-and-now. Both styles of worship are appropriate because the God of Christian faith is neither absent from his people nor fully identifiable with them. Returning to the example with which I began, we may conclude that neither reading of the inscription on the banner in the parish church does justice to the mystery. God is neither other people nor does he dwell in remote seclusion. FT

Odin's Eye

Odin didn't have to give it up,
you know;
didn't have to pluck out that Nordic orb,
that gob-stopper, whose twin, it's said,
was the sun.

He didn't have to give it up
because he was chief of the gods, you know,
and rank does have its privileges;
but Mimir the dwarf said it
was the least he could do
to drink from the fount of wisdom.

So "plop" it went out of the socket;
and Odin got his drink.
Did he guzzle it down and smack his lips,
or savor it drop by drop?
Or was it, you know,
thick and bitter
and smell all of the grave?

Odin later died, of course;
all the Norse gods did.
The Frost giants got the best of them.
One-eyed Odin was wise by then and saw it coming;
but when your destiny's to be chow for a wolf
isn't it better to own all your parts
in happy incomprehension
than it is to know that all myths are as grass,
that they wither and perish as leaves on the trees?

And what was in it anyway,
in that chalice that made him wise,
beyond grief and pain and patience
and all the loved things we have to fling over
to be as wise as dwarves?

David Hartman

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The Blind Programmer

Edward T. Oakes

How the Mind Works. By Steven Pinker. *Norton. 660 pp. $29.95.*

The MIT linguist Noam Chomsky once drew an important distinction between problems and mysteries. A "problem" in Chomskian parlance is a question that is symbiotically fused to an ascertainable answer; it is an *explanandum* (a thought-provoking puzzle) that has, somewhere out there, a matching explanation—one, moreover, that must be attainable (at least theoretically) by a universally accepted method. "How hot is the core of the sun?" and "When was the last crater on the moon formed?" would be problems in this sense: we might not ever find out the answers but they are at least theoretically available. A "mystery," on the other hand, is a question that, while it makes perfect grammatical sense, cannot *in principle* be answered, at least by an assertion that could command the assent of all through a prior agreed-upon method.

One example of a mystery in this sense (not used by Chomsky) would be Martin Heidegger's famous question at the beginning of his *Introduction to Metaphysics:* "Why are there things that exist rather than nothing at all?" Now this obviously is a question that science is not even remotely competent to answer. If there exists an answer to the question, it must be accessible only through some other mode of insight. Indeed, those who claim to furnish answers to such imponderable mysteries are called, both by themselves and by others, "believers," a clear admission on the part of all that some answers, if they exist, come to us by some faculty other than problem-solving reason. As Pascal says with his usual precision, "Reason's last step is the recognition that there are an infinite number of things which are beyond it."

It is striking how many of these Chomskian-style mysteries cluster around the issue of the human mind. There seems to be nothing like the topic of mind/soul/self/spirit for generating such unanswerable questions as: Everyone knows that perception is perspectival, but why am *I* the one who is looking out on the world through this bodily window and not someone else? Why was I born in this century and not another, of this sex and not the other, of these parents in this nation and not elsewhere of someone else? If materialist neuroscientists are correct that the brain secretes thoughts the way the liver does bile, why are they *my* thoughts? Bile, after all, is a chemical concoction produced in that metabolic factory called the liver; but thoughts are not chemicals, just thoughts. "How is it," as Thomas Huxley once put it, "that anything so remarkable as a state of consciousness comes about as a result of irritating nervous tissue?"

As the title of his new book indicates, Steven Pinker has set himself the challenge of telling us how this remarkable feat happens. But it soon becomes clear that the boldness of his claim depends on his skill in finessing any number of "mystery issues." He clearly thinks the time is ripe for moving the topic of mind from the Mystery to the Problem column, but even he admits that certain mysteries remain, among which he includes sentience, consciousness, free will, and our sense of personal identity over time—not exactly peripheral issues to "how the mind works." (The second sentence of the book openly admits that "we don't understand how the mind works." And later he asks the reader, "How can a book called *How the Mind Works* evade the responsibility of explaining where sentience comes from?" Tellingly, he never gets around to answering his own question, which makes the title a bit of a tease.)

But one must at least give the author credit for not

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defining the problem out of existence. Unlike so many of his colleagues in the field of evolutionary psychology (like the theorist he cites who claims that consciousness is a late cultural development, a feature of the human species unknown either to the Greeks of Homer's day or to the Hebrews of the Old Testament), he at least does not resort to the expedient of wishing the problem away with a bit of terminological legerdemain. He rightly says that there is something about the topic of consciousness that makes people, much like the White Queen in *Through the Looking Glass,* believe six impossible things before breakfast, among which one would surely have to include the notion that Moses was a mere bundle of unconscious physiological reactions who was personally unaware of the taste of salt or that Homer didn't know red when he saw it. (There is also an opposite absurdity floating around among the Artificial Intelligentsia: the claim, as in David Chalmers' new book *The Conscious Mind,* that thermostats and galaxies are conscious, a thesis that recalls, once more, Pascal's insistence that if reason operated rightly it would not lead us astray with delusions about its own greatness.)

These strange expedients are obviously an effort to work around the "mystery" of consciousness by wishing it away. What makes Pinker's book so instructive is his willingness to address the "problem" of the mind while staying inside the circle of common sense, which can recognize a mystery when it sees one. But science—which is an outgrowth of problem-solving reason—does not like to stub its toe against mysteries, and so is all too prone to wave the problem out of existence by invoking the magic of Redefining Terms (bait-and-switch is Pinker's useful term for the strategy). This is why so many previous efforts to explain the phenomenon of consciousness were basically high-grade versions of behaviorism, a research program that simply begged the question by translating consciousness into behavior, which was itself then explained strictly in terms of stimulus-response, a physical phenomenon open to problem-solving reason.

It was the great merit of Noam Chomsky's linguistics to have exploded that project from within by showing that language acquisition in children could never occur under the behaviorist rubric, as if children learned a language by imitating the observed verbal behavior of their elders inside a schema of reward/punishment. On the contrary, Chomsky showed, the child is endowed with an ability for generating—and understanding—an infinite set of sentences that are themselves the medium for expressing entirely new *thoughts* that had never been expressed before. No wonder Chomsky called one of his most seminal books *Cartesian Linguistics,* for the inevitable implication of his theory was that the mind belongs to an entirely different order of reality (where Mysteries rule) than does the body, whose functioning is one vast Problem that can be studied under the rubric of scientific methodology.

No wonder also that Chomsky has been one of the sharpest critics of Darwinian explanations for evolution. He is no creationist and would never dream of denying evolution per se, but he has always found Darwin's theory of natural selection to be a vast non sequitur, that is, a theory that invokes the *explanandum* in the explanation: "It is perfectly safe to attribute [innate mental structures] to 'natural selection,'" he says, "so long as we realize that there is no substance to this assertion, that it amounts to nothing more than a belief that there is some naturalistic explanation for these phenomena. . . . In the case of such systems as language and wings it is not easy even to imagine a course of selection that might have given rise to them."

The uniqueness of Pinker's book (and part of what will certainly make it one of the most influential works on the human mind of this decade) is due to the uniqueness of his pedigree: he started off at Montreal as a behaviorist, but when working on a doctorate in psycholinguistics at Harvard he took courses under Chomsky at MIT and "converted," if that is the right word, to his teacher's Cartesian model of language acquisition; but when he became a faculty member at MIT (largely a Darwin-free zone, at least in the Linguistics and Psychology Departments) he "apostatized," so to speak, and became that strangest of animals in the intellectuals' menagerie: a Darwinian Chomskian.

His first book for the general public, *The Language Instinct,* was largely an exposition of Chomsky's linguistics for the lay reader, but even there his Darwinian colors were evident, starting with the title (Darwin called human language an instinct). But if Chomsky is right, how can Darwin be right? The problem is that the expressive power of human language is so much more powerful than would seem to be needed in some hypothetical hominid setting; bees after all speak a purely instinctive "language" of semaphoric dances to indicate location of pollen sources, but their form of communication has no power of, or need for, infinite sentence-generation.

Pinker's rejoinder to this conundrum in *The Language Instinct* was the old Yiddish retort, "What's the matter, is the bride too beautiful?" Meaning, no one ever complains that cheetahs are faster than they need to be, or that eagles don't really need such good vision as they in fact enjoy. But this rejoinder might be too clever by half: Rather like the embezzler who claims that his coworkers are helping themselves to office supplies for private use, this argument merely extends the challenge to other areas. To add to his difficulties, Pinker frankly admitted in this, his first best-seller, that an evolutionary scenario for language acquisition might permanently elude us for lack of fossil evidence. Archaeologists who look for evidence of the evolution of language amid such tan-

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gible remnants as stone tools and cranial capacity are for Pinker like the drunk who looks for his keys under the lamppost because that is where the light is best.

But if evidence for the evolution of language is permanently closed to us, that leaves a Darwinian Chomskian in the unhappy position of answering Chomsky's challenge to Darwin's hypothesis with his own pure-spun hypotheses, which is why the conditional mood abounded in this section of the book ("Thus the first traces of language *could* have appeared as early as Lucy," etc.). Clearly, Pinker was going to have to move the argument to higher ground if he wanted to avoid the logical hole of shoring up one hypothesis with another; and so we have here in *How the Mind Works* Pinker's more full-scale defense of a Darwinian explanation of the mind that does not, he claims, lapse into the absurdities of behaviorism or invent evidence where none is available.

Pinker's end-run around the lack of evidence consists in perhaps the most important concept of the book, reverse-engineering: On the analogy of the Defense Department taking apart a MIG fighter-jet when a North Korean pilot defects or a future archaeologist who might wonder what a strange contraption like the cotton gin is for, the author says that we can do the same with all organisms shaped by natural selection. This is because natural selection selects for functionality: what functions best in its environment has higher chances of living long enough to pass on its genes to the next generation, thus keeping the selected variation in the population, something that could occur only if the variation were useful for a purpose. If the proverbial Martian received a FedEx package on his planet with the bones of a terrestrial bird in it, he might be able to figure out that the wing bones were for flying, *provided he knew that the earth's atmosphere was dense enough to sustain flight.*

As this example shows, many assumptions can slip in unawares in reverse-engineering: a Martian ignorant of the earth's atmosphere could easily leap to all kinds of other conclusions about the meaning of wing bones: perhaps they are appendages for signaling or are the scaffolding for feathers of sexual display, like the feathers of the peacock. (Nor would such a guess be all that absurd: if our putative Martians had been sent a whole moose skeleton via interplanetary UPS, the little green man who first guessed that antlers were for sexual display would not be that far off the mark, since antlers evolved—or so says the theory—from the increasingly competitive battles among bucks for does.)

This thought-experiment clearly points out the danger to Pinker's enterprise. What will prevent *him,* and not just our favorite Martian, from indulging in a lot of similar after-the-fact storytelling, much in the manner of Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories,* those fanciful (and delightful) tales about how animals got their traits? Even more awkwardly, mythology too is rife with Just So stories, called by experts "etiological myths," such as the Greek story of how mulberry trees got to be red: because of the blood spilled by the slain lovers Pyramus and Thisbe, who haplessly met for their fateful tryst under a mulberry tree.

Pinker's project of reverse-engineering his way back through evolutionary history will be filled with dangers and pitfalls, and he alerts the reader to his wariness of these methodological potholes. He is, for example, more than a little embarrassed by the cottage industry that evolutionary psychology has become, as when he distances himself from such loopy theories as these: men don't like asking for directions because in caveman times to ask a stranger for directions would have been risky; brown hair comes from the primatial need to hide among coconuts; happiness evolved because happy people are pleasant to be around and so they attracted more allies, thereby upping their chances for survival. All very charming, and barely a step up from Kipling's nursery tales. But it turns out Pinker's objections to the methodology of these scenarios (which is where the real problem lies) are mostly of the tinkering variety: who says *women* are all that eager to ask for directions, goes one of his objections.

One can see why Pinker can only pick away at the edges of this kind of "reasoning," because when he gets to his own version of reverse-engineering, he veers off into Kipling Land himself, as in his hypothesis that primates developed 3-D vision the better to spot insects against a forest bed of identical-seeming leaves, or that men take women to restaurants on dates because in our hunting-gathering days hunter-men brought home the meat of dead carcasses to gatherer-women. It is not that these stories are out-and-out incredible, like the Pyramus and Thisbe story; it's just that, formally speaking, they are as fanciful as the brown-hair-and-coconut hypothesis they are meant to replace. And above all, they are hypotheses that are meant to shore up the original hypothesis that was supposed to be the question at issue but which somewhere along the line got assumed into the fabric of the argument the better to justify his reverse-engineering project.

In saying this, I must stress that I am not indulging in a little amateur Darwin-bashing. The thesis has been floating about for some years now that Darwin, Marx, and Freud are the three great Founding Fathers of modern reductivism (man is "nothing but" his evolutionary history, economic self-interest, infantile neuroses, and so forth), and now that Marx and Freud have received their comeuppance, it's Darwin's turn. I don't think that will work. For one thing, Darwin's personality is not open to the charges of misanthropy, manipulation, and megalomania that have recently been leveled, with consider-

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able justice, against Marx and Freud.*

Nor is the fact of evolution even remotely deniable, as Pope John Paul II recently averred, to a certain amount of annoyance, even consternation, in some quarters. Of course, the *theory* of natural selection is certainly a matter for ongoing debate; but however debatable certain features of the theory are, the *fact* of Mendelian genetics compels the recognition of certain basic biological realities, such as: 1) genes replicate digitally; 2) there are always minor, random variations in each succeeding generation of replicates; and 3) the generation of offspring takes place at increasing rates of expansion (parents generally procreate more than two offspring).

None of these facts is in the least assailable, and they all serve as foundational to Darwin's explanation of evolution (the fact that his theory needed the results of Gregor Mendel's research but that he was unaware of the work of his contemporary monkish botanist is, in my opinion, a testimony to an impressive leap of imagination on Darwin's part, one that is necessary in all scientific hypothesizing). But precisely because evolutionary biology is by definition a retrospective enterprise, it is particularly prone to the lazy assumption that because we know the outcome, we know the cause: yes, men do take women to restaurants on dates, and yes, hunter-men brought home the bacon to forager-women in nomadic times, but it's a pretty big leap to say the latter caused the former; and it is into that gap that Pinker falls with the regularity of a vaudeville comedian doing a slapstick routine. (Pinker, the reader will not be surprised to learn, has an evolutionary explanation for slapstick.)†

Where Darwinism is liable to go astray is in its final assumption: granted that life hands itself on by replication with minor variations in the replicates, Darwinism must then go on to say that those variants are selected that best serve the survival and reproduction rates of the offspring, which become by definition the "fitter" variants. Critics accuse this postulate of being tautological, and in a way it is (only the "fittest" survive; and who are they? the ones that survive). But since a tautology is a statement true by definition, that rejoinder can hardly render the theory false, provided the remaining principles are empirically grounded.

What is crucial is not the tautology but the way this tautology, when married to the rest of the package, can both generate real insights and yet also (and at the same time) lead a thinker astray. As for the real insights, Pinker can be quite interesting.

> Reproduction leads to a geometric increase in descendants, and on a finite planet not every organism alive in one generation can have descendants several generations hence. . . . [Thus] everyone alive today is a descendant of millions of generations of ancestors who lived under these constraints but reproduced nonetheless. That means that all people today owe their existence to having winners as ancestors, and everyone today is designed, at least in some circumstances, to compete.

True enough, but the trouble is that this applies to *all* organisms alive today, which deprives the insight from providing any explanatory purchase on the here and now. (Both Woody Allen and Arnold

* Pinker is quite willing to join the recent Freud-bashing bandwagon, but adds a new Darwinian twist: Freud's idea that male toddlers are sexually attracted to their mothers is, he points out, an evolutionary absurdity. Moreover, the incest "taboo" against sibling sex is a figment of the anthropologist's imagination: "Do brothers and sisters avoid copulating because their parents discourage it?" he asks. If they did, he notes, it would be the first time in all of human experience in which a sexual prohibition worked. *Avoiding* incest is universal, *taboos* against it are not. Which brings us back to Freud, whose talent for misreading texts was nearly boundless. As any reader with the scantiest freshman's exposure to the play could see, Freud completely misunderstood Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex:* the eponymous hero, after all, married his mother *unknowingly* and was truly horrified when the truth came out.

† For readers eager to know how he weaves *that* particular scenario, I offer his argument in a nutshell: First, when the human brain evolved to a certain size, man became not just a carnivore but an "informavore," who could share information with his tribe at little cost to himself. That meant that information became crucial to a tribe and that therefore some of the males could win power (and hence females) because of their expertise and not just because of their brute strength. These brainy but not so brawny males, however, could also *fake* their expertise, because to check out the correctness of the information would be costly in time and effort (and brain power), so that some informavores gained power falsely. But once in power these soi-disant experts were hard to dislodge. That set up a discrepancy between assumed power and real strength. And since it is the whole point of slapstick to bring down the mighty to the level of ordinary mortals, public ritualized ridicule arose out of a sense in the tribe of the disjunction between those with power and those without.

Anyone capable of piling on such a mountain of hypotheses and assumptions and calling it an argument is clearly living in an *ex post facto* world of such blinding obliviousness that he has failed to see the missing link, as it were, in his chain of argument: to survive as an evolutionarily beneficial variation, this proclivity for slapstick would have to have helped the tribe and/or comedian survive the rigors of decidedly unfunny jungle life (nasty, brutish, short, etc.). A contemporary Woody Allen might be good for Manhattan cocktail party chatter, but it is a little hard to imagine how a primate version of Laurel and Hardy could drive along the engine of human evolution, though I suppose it does give a whole new range of meaning to the title of one of Isaac Bashevis Singer's short stories, "Schlemiel the First."

Readers who have followed the "argument" thus far will not be surprised to note that Pinker justifies *Hamlet* as a survival manual. It became a classic—yes, even in the Darwinian jungle-world of theater critics—because the spectator sees the play and is horrified at the idea of dispatching his fiancée to a nunnery, thereby making her forfeit her chance to take a plunge in the gene pool, and this horror saves the spectator's genes for posterity as well. Whether this evolutionary cleverness works better if "he" takes "her" to the play after a pre-theater caveman-style supper of red meat from dead animals Pinker does not say. Those who like Freud on *Oedipus Rex* will relish Pinker on *Hamlet*.

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Schwarzenegger are heirs of winners, so why not say the cult of bodybuilding has been selected-for just as comedy has?) This vast explanatory sprawl is most unfortunate, because it undermines what is surely Pinker's central thesis: that the human mind, *pace* Chomsky, is not an all-or-nothing affair but is essentially *modular*. Modularity is obviously crucial for Pinker, since discrete components of mind are much easier to fit into a schema of natural selection than would be a sudden emergence of human mind with its famous epistemic grasp reaching to infinity. For Pinker's central assertion in this book is that nature is not just a "blind watchmaker" that can unthinkingly devise complex organisms but is also a "blind programmer" that has, unbeknownst to itself, selected for a computer-like human mind endowed with discrete "programs" outfitted for discrete tasks.

Whether he is successful in the evolutionary segment of the argument can be questioned, but I found his mapping of the mind's essential modularity convincing. In one amusing image, he compares the mind—whose components do not necessarily work in perfect complementarity—to the Israeli or Italian Parliament, whose many factions, splinter parties, and shifting coalitions make it rather difficult for outsiders to discern who has actually got the floor (or government) at any one moment. In a passage faintly reminiscent of St. Paul's famous dissection of the servility of the will in Romans 7, Pinker shows how this modular cacophony can undermine our best interests, as in the case of the man who sits glued to a TV set who should be preparing for tomorrow's business meeting, knowing that he will regret it, and wakes up the next morning in a cold sweat and does regret it. And he notes our strange ways of defeating self-defeating behavior: placing tempting snacks out of reach, putting the alarm clock across the room, setting our watches five minutes ahead, etc.

So one can easily grant Pinker's insights into human nature (he is a sharp observer of the human scene), while remaining puzzled at the bizarre evolutionary scenarios he weaves into the insights. But despite his explanatory promiscuity, there are still some further ways of wringing a bit more non-tautological mileage from the fact of competition, survival, and reproduction—especially in mammals. Mammals by definition are an animal-type whose females nurse their young through their mammary glands, and from this and a few other basic features of mammalian life we can deduce the following ineluctable conclusions:

> First, a single male can fertilize several females, which forces other males to go mateless. That sets up a competition among males for access to females. . . . Males therefore vary in reproductive success. A winner can beget many offspring, a loser will beget none.
>
> Second, the reproductive success of males depends on how many females they mate with, but the reproductive success of females does not depend on how many males they mate with. That makes females more discriminating. Males woo females and mate with any female that lets them. Females scrutinize males and mate only with the best ones: the ones with the best genes, the ones most willing and able to feed and protect her offspring, or the ones that other females tend to prefer.

In other words, "Male competition and female choice are ubiquitous in the animal world."

An old joke has it that a neoconservative is a liberal with a teenage daughter. In a way, the veritable cascade of consequences that Pinker is able to draw from these elementary insights of mammalian life can be seen as an extended commentary on that witticism. Certainly there can be no contemporary intellectual more scathing toward what he calls the Standard Social Science Model (SSSM for short), a kind of First Principle and Foundation for liberal political theory, according to which there is a fundamental division between biology and culture. Biology might have given us a few basic drives like hunger and the instinct for self-preservation, and of course a capacity to learn, says the SSSM; but that capacity then takes over and perpetuates *an autonomous entity* called culture that arbitrarily assigns roles, determines identities, locks in futures, etc., arrangements that can—and do—vary from culture to culture.

All of this, Pinker insists, is simply, utterly, and totally false. He even makes so bold as to claim that there is a separate female nature different from male nature for the simple reason that sexual desires that were adaptive for one sex were tickets to reproductive oblivion for the other. Nor does it refute his view to say that he is relying on "gender stereotypes," as if that alone were proof of falsity. As he says, the belief that spiders spin webs and pigs don't fly is also a stereotype, but is no less true for that. Moreover, in its otherwise laudable attempt to undermine some genuinely sexist and eminently changeable stereotypes (women are shy and retiring, men domineering, etc.), the SSSM goes overboard and presents a philosophy of human nature that is incredible from bottom up.

> A Martian [him again] who wanted to learn about human interaction from a textbook in social psychology would have no inkling that humans behave any differently to their relatives than to strangers. Some anthropologists have argued that our sense of kinship has nothing to do with biological relatedness. The conventional wisdom of Marxists, academic feminists, and café intellectuals embraces some astonishing claims: that the nuclear family of husband, wife, and children is a historical aberration unknown in centuries past and in the non-Western world;

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> that in primitive tribes marriage is uncommon and people are indiscriminately promiscuous and free of jealousy; that throughout history the bride and groom had no say in their marriage; that romantic love was invented by the troubadours of medieval Provence and consisted of the adulterous love of a knight for a married lady; that children used to be thought of as miniature adults; that in olden times children died so often that mothers were unaffected by the loss; that concern for one's children is a recent invention. These beliefs are false. Blood really *is* thicker than water, and no aspect of human existence is untouched by that part of our psychology.

Including politics. Again, Pinker can draw some extremely helpful insights from just a few basic facts of mammalian biology, insights that give a whole new theoretical foundation to neoconservative political economics.

> Parental love causes the fundamental paradox of politics: no society can be simultaneously fair, free, and equal. If it is fair, people who work harder can accumulate more. If it is free, people will give their wealth to their children. But then it cannot be equal, for some people will inherit wealth they did not earn. Ever since Plato called attention to these tradeoffs in *The Republic*, most political ideologies can be defined by the stance they take on which of these ideals should yield.

Clearly, those who tilt toward the equality side will have to try to outwit or trump biology, which explains as well as anything why liberals and feminists are so insistent that "biology is not destiny." And to a real extent they are right, for to require that biology be our destiny is to bring us right back to the error of social Darwinism, where survival of the fittest as a biological tautology becomes the "might makes right" ideology of fascism and the "end justifies the means" ideology of communism.

One way of steering clear of the Standard Social Studies Model without lapsing into social Darwinism is to look at the biology of polygamy, or more accurately, polygyny (the mating of one male with more than one female). In the mammalian reproductive arrangement it is simply a "fact of life," as they say, that "a fertile woman never has a shortage of willing sexual partners, and in that buyer's market she can seek the best husband available, the best genes." This is why in despotic societies, where one male enjoys all the power, women may genuinely prefer to share one wealthy husband than to have the undivided attention of a pauper. But far from being the defense of polygyny that it sounds like, Pinker's observation leads to the corollary: that egalitarianism and monogamy go together as naturally as despotism does with polygyny. Although he doesn't quite say so explicitly, Pinker certainly lends credence to the claim of conservatives that democracy and the monogamous nuclear family go together and cannot be sheared off from each other without damage to both.

So polygyny seems biologically plausible only at first glance; further ethical considerations alter the recipe considerably, a point Pinker needs to make at almost every turn, lest he be taken as an apologist for every harem in history. In fact, the main problem with *How the Mind Works*, besides the clutter of his many Just So stories, is Pinker's reluctance to bring forward the ethical challenge *enough*. For only a well-rooted ethical analysis can bridge the perennial gulf between those who want to root culture in biology and those who look to culture to free us from our biological constraints. Without the primacy of ethics, the former leads to Social Darwinism and the latter to Stalin's ideal of the New Soviet Man.

This is particularly true in the case of the latest wrinkle in sociobiology, Richard Dawkins' theory of the "selfish gene." When not taken literally, the theory is, again, almost tautologically true: genes that build bodies that survive into their reproductive years get transmitted to the next generation; those that code for bodies that for one reason or another don't procreate leave the gene pool forever. This rather obvious truth can lead to puzzles like celibacy and altruism, but most of these can be resolved simply by insisting with feminists that in fact biology is *not* destiny, or as Pinker puts it in his ringing autobiographical manifesto:

> Nature does not dictate what we should accept or how we should live our lives. . . . Happiness and virtue have nothing to do with what natural selection designed us to accomplish in the ancestral environment. They are for us to determine. In saying this I am no hypocrite, even though I am a conventional straight white male. Well into my procreating years I am, so far, voluntarily childless, having squandered my biological resources reading and writing, doing research, helping out friends and students, and jogging in circles, ignoring the solemn imperative to spread my genes. By Darwinian standards I am a horrible mistake, a pathetic loser, not one iota less than if I were a card-carrying member of Queer Nation. But I am happy to be that way, and if my genes don't like it, they can go jump in a lake.

Obviously, if genes botch the job over the long haul, they botch their own existence; and if genes code for mother love the better to help the infant survive into its own reproductive years, the better for mom, baby, and genes. But genes are not moral

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agents, or indeed agents of any kind, and on that insight hangs the key to the nature-versus-nurture debate.

> Many people think that the theory of the selfish gene says that "animals try to spread their genes." That misstates the facts and it misstates the theory. Animals, including most people, know nothing about genetics and care even less. People love their children not because they want to spread their genes (consciously or unconsciously) but because they can't help it. That love makes them try to keep their children warm, fed, and safe. What is selfish is not the real motives of the person but the metaphorical motives of the genes that built the person. . . . The confusion comes from thinking of people's genes as their true self, and the motives of their genes as their deepest, truest, unconscious motives. From there it's easy to draw the cynical and incorrect moral that all love is hypocritical. That confuses the real motives of the person with the metaphorical motives of the genes. Genes are not puppetmasters; they acted as the recipe for making the brain and body and then they got out of the way. They live in a parallel universe, scattered among bodies, with their own agendas.

Does that mean, then, that the Standard Social Science Model is correct? Does biology operate in its own parallel universe and culture in another? By no means, says Pinker, no more than our emotions operate independently of biological imperatives. It would be much more accurate to say that *ethics* and biology operate in different universes of discourse.

> Science and morality are separate spheres of reasoning. Only by recognizing them as separate can we have them both. If discrimination is wrong only if group averages are the same, if war and rape and greed are wrong only if people are never inclined toward them, if people are responsible for their actions only if the actions are mysterious, then either scientists must be prepared to fudge their data or all of us must be prepared to give up our values. Scientific arguments would turn into the *National Lampoon* cover showing a puppy with a gun at its head and the caption "Buy This Magazine or We'll Shoot the Dog."

Nor is this threat to "shoot the dog" an idle one. What Pinker is referring to here is the worrisome trend in courtrooms for juries to acquit admitted criminals whose defense attorneys can show the defendants' brain states at the time of the crime, as if physical causation excused the criminal's exercise of free will. This is now known as the Twinkie Defense, from the notorious case of the councilman who walked into San Francisco's City Hall and murdered the mayor and a fellow alderman and who later got off with an involuntary manslaughter charge on the pretext that junk food impaired his free will. This is what Pinker calls (borrowing Daniel Dennett's fine phrase) the Specter of Creeping Exculpation, a trend that will only increase if we do not concede at the outset the independent status of ethical judgment (and hence free will) over accounts of physical causation.

All fine and well, if only Pinker took his own eloquent words seriously. He obviously writes well and with real flair (this must surely be the only book in cognitive psychology to become a Main Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club). Clever without being mannered, he has, what is more, a mind like grandmother's attic: his mental gallery, much like a storage room in the Smithsonian Institution, is filled with factoidal bric-a-brac that he can call up at will and that, unlike the factoids flashed on the screen by CNN before a commercial break, he makes directly relevant to his point, whether it be Miss Manners on dating rituals, Mae West one-liners on mammalian imbalance between the sexes ("men like women with a past," she says, "because they hope history will repeat itself"), or Yiddish sayings on village competition.

But over the whole project looms the ethical question, and for all his apparent concessions, it is a question that Pinker fudges.* This becomes especially blatant in his final chapter, which surprisingly turns into a revanchist exercise to "explain" religion using the very techniques Pinker had earlier admitted could not be used to "explain" consciousness or ethics—rather as if Pinker had become his own blind programmer cranking out assertions without testing them against the rest of the book. "Religion," he blithely explains, "is a desperate measure that people resort to when the stakes are high and they have exhausted the usual techniques for the causation of success. . . . [This] demand for miracles creates a market that would-be priests compete in, and they can succeed by exploiting people's dependence on experts."

This farrago of warmed-over Mencken sits poorly with earlier avowals that consciousness remains a mystery, that biology cannot dictate morality, and that morality and mystery go together: "A final conundrum is morality," he says. "If I secretly hatchet the unhappy, despised pawnbroker, where is the evil nature of that act registered? What does it mean to say that I 'shouldn't' do it? How did *ought* emerge from a universe of particles and planets, genes and bodies?" Odd that Pinker has chosen the plot-line from Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* to illus-

* In a recent article in the *New York Times Magazine*, Pinker provides an evolutionary "explanation" for infanticide, an explanation that quickly segues into an implied justification. (See James Nuechterlein, "Infanticide for Beginners," FT, January 1998.)

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trate his point, for it was precisely this epileptic Russian novelist who saw that without God everything is permitted.

And so it turns out, after all, that Pinker does have a major problem with mystery. Despite earlier avowals, the idea that reason has limits just won't wash with him. And *that* is what most bothers him about religion.

> The problem with the religious solution was stated by Mencken when he wrote, "Theology is the effort to explain the unknowable in terms of the not worth knowing." For anyone with a persistent intellectual curiosity, religious explanations are not worth knowing because they pile equally baffling enigmas on top of original ones. What gave *God* a mind, free will, knowledge, certainty about right and wrong? How does he infuse them into a universe that seems to run just fine according to physical laws? How does he get ghostly souls to interact with hard matter? And most perplexing of all, if the world unfolds according to a wise and merciful plan, why does it contain so much suffering? As the Yiddish expression says, If God lived on earth, people would break his windows.

This passage is as good an example as any of the difficulty believers have in debating secular materialists, for to the believer it makes no sense to ask behind God. I myself don't get much exercised by modern unbelief, since it is not so much up to the individual to defend God but God the individual (and anyway, I am sure God can defend Himself from Pinker's shopworn, hand-me-down positivism). But it becomes hard even to debate the point when one is faced with these dormitory retorts, since the very God I believe in is the *termination point* for these mysteries, so that for Pinker to raise this objection is to deny the very God who is supposed to be the focus of the debate.

Pinker claims that believers invoke God to short-circuit their curiosity, but he ignores the way faith has served, at least in the tradition of Christian philosophy best represented by Thomas Aquinas and Etienne Gilson, as a provocation to further reasoning. That is why, if Pinker is as persistent in his intellectual curiosity as he claims to be, he can find answers to all of his Menckenesque questions except the last two in Book I of Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Contra Gentiles,* while the influence of spirit on matter is treated in Book II of the same work and the meaning of suffering and evil in a world created by a good God is treated in his separate works *De Malo* and his magnificent *Commentary on Job.*

Of course the acceptability of these answers depends on giving priority to faith and trusting that it can rightly guide (not replace) reason. For as Pinker makes clear, often against his own stated intentions, reason-baffling Mysteries still remain, *and always will.* This is why the last word in this debate must be given, as in so many other areas, to Pascal. "How the mind works" is of course via the brain, and it is no mere metaphor when people call a smart person "brainy" or say of someone's financial woes that he's got credit-card debts "on the brain." But there is another organ of insight, one that Pascal calls the heart, and here the reference is purely metaphorical. But that is the whole point. Far better than relying solely on reason is simply to admit at the outset with Pascal that "man's condition is dual." That is why for Pascal "without faith man would remain inconceivable to himself." Through the heart we immediately apprehend truths that reason, left to its own devices and without the guidance of faith, can never *in principle* reach. "That is what faith is," says Pascal: "God perceived by the heart, not by reason." FT

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Books In Review

Tu Quoque

MANUFACTURING RELIGION: THE DISCOURSE ON SUI GENERIS RELIGION AND THE POLITICS OF NOSTALGIA. By RUSSELL T. MCCUTCHEON. *Oxford University Press. 249 pp. $32.*

***Reviewed by* Paul J. Griffiths**

THE ACADEMIC STUDY of religion is in something of a theoretical muddle at the moment. In its early days it defined itself mostly by contrast with theology, presenting itself as neutral and scientific rather than confessional and committed, in the service of the academy rather than the church. But the impact of postmodernist and poststructuralist thought of various kinds has left its practitioners unsure that this distinction can be coherently maintained, and as a result unsure of the value of what they are doing, or indeed that they are doing anything at all. This self-doubt shows itself in endless fascination with debates about method, and in the tendency of younger scholars to seek the dissolution of the discipline into those that seem slightly less riven by self-doubt (history, sociology, cultural theory). This is the context for Russell T. McCutcheon's book.

Given that context, it is not surprising that this is not a book about religion. It is, instead, a book about certain kinds of talk about religion; it argues, with an air of drama and mystery, that books about religion should have no other topic. It's as if a baseball writer, unsure that it's any longer worth writing about a cultural fiction like baseball, were to argue that the only proper topic of baseball books is the prose style and political convictions of other baseball writers.

Some talk about religion makes its object out to be unique, autonomous, self-generated, essentially independent of culture and history, and not amenable to study by the methods beloved of historians, sociologists, psychologists, and other toilers in the vineyards of the *Geisteswissenschaften*. It is this kind of talk that interests McCutcheon, who is a teacher of religion at Southwestern Missouri State University. He thinks it a bad thing and one that ought to stop, mostly because of the unpleasant effects he judges it to have upon everything from the university to the geopolitical order.

PAUL J. GRIFFITHS *is Professor of the Philosophy of Religions in the Divinity School of the University of Chicago.*

Books for the Culture Wars

No Liberty for License: The Forgotten Logic of the First Amendment **by David Lowenthal** with a foreword by Harvey C. Mansfield

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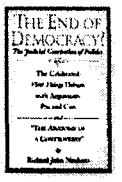
The End of Democracy? The Judicial Usurpation of Politics:
The Celebrated *FIRST THINGS* Debate with Arguments Pro and Con, and "The Anatomy of a Controversy" by Richard John Neuhaus



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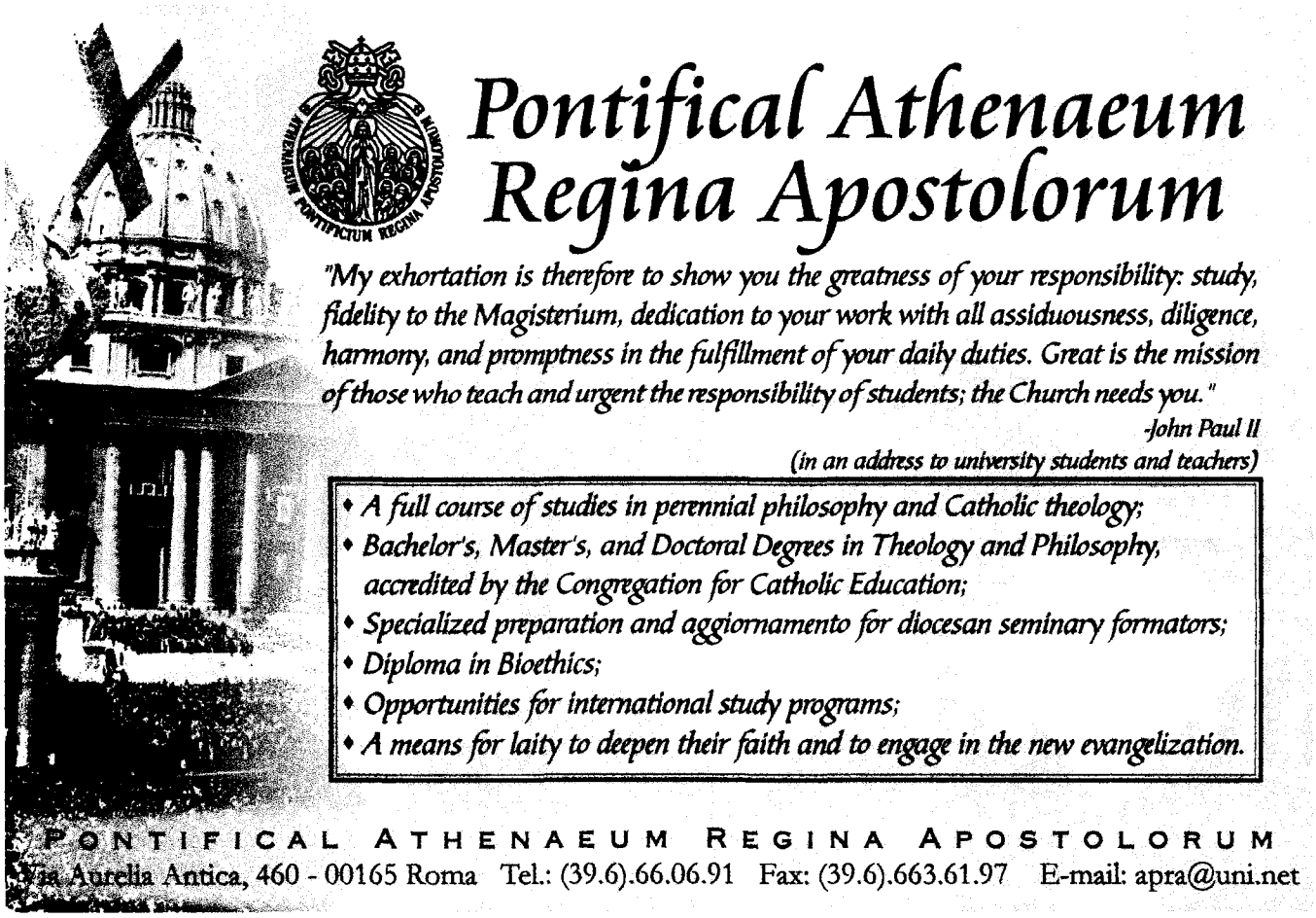
McCutcheon's paradigm of the wrong kind of talk about religion is found in the work of Mircea Eliade, a Romanian scholar of religion a good part of whose academic career was spent in the U.S. Almost half the book is devoted to an examination of the ideas about the nature of religion implied by Eliade's work, and by the scholarly reception of this work. The second half of the book comments on the ways in which religion is understood and presented in college and university textbooks, and in the work of scholars of religion concerned (as they endlessly are) to explain their method; it also offers some arguments about the connections between these understandings of religion and the political, economic, and institutional conditions that make their development possible.

McCutcheon's fundamental conviction is that if you think of religion in general (or indeed any particular religion) as in any sense transhistorical, autonomous, and unique, you will be using a protective strategy: you will be insulating yourself and your talk from "uncomfortable questions about standpoint and privilege" and from hard-nosed sociopolitical analysis. And you will be doing this principally in the interest of preserving your own power and influence by insulating these things from criticism (and even from discussion). You will become a prophet speaking the word from beyond history and out of this world; or you will become a priest delivering to the people the latest authoritative interpretation of divine revelation. And in either case you will be protected, because what you say will have (or will be taken to have) special status. Christian theologians, thinks McCutcheon, have always adopted these strategies; and many contemporary academics working on religion do the same, using what is in fact an ersatz, transposed form of theology whose object is no longer God and God's demands upon us, but rather this mysterious thing called religion. McCutcheon's natives, those whom he studies as participant-observer, are precisely these academics: his fieldwork is done, as he says, at academic conferences, departmental curriculum meetings, and other such exotic sites.

The scale, says McCutcheon (quoting Mircea Eliade), makes the phenomenon, which means that the concepts you use to order your study will determine how that study goes. If you use a concept of religion that makes of it a transhistorical essence you will almost certainly not pay attention to local, contingent, social, and political factors in your study, because such things are not what your "scale" is designed to measure. This seems right, even if trivially so. But Mc-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Cutcheon adds to it another claim, which is that scholars of religion ought never to use scales that encourage or require them to pay attention to transhistorical or ahistorical matters (such as God or the true nature of things). Instead, they ought always and everywhere to historicize, to localize, to look at what happens on the ground, to study religion in terms only of minds, economies, societies, classes, and genders, and to eschew talk of gods, spirits, revelations, and truth. This normative claim recommends (even requires) the use of one final vocabulary for scholars of religion, and therefore naturally places a ban upon the use of all others. But how, given McCutcheon's own avowedly naturalistic perspective upon matters religious and philosophical, is it possible to justify or argumentatively defend such a normative claim?

McCUTCHEON'S FIRST strategy here is simple. He argues that if you study religion as an ahistorical essentialist you will, as a result, be led to ignore (or at least pay insufficient attention to) historical specificity. The implication here is that more is better: the more things a particular method gets its users to pay attention to, the better. The ideal method would get its users to pay attention to everything. In making this argument (and it is made ad nauseam in the book), McCutcheon shows himself to be in the grip of a notion of scholarship according to which the ideal explanation of anything is the total explanation, and in which, correspond-

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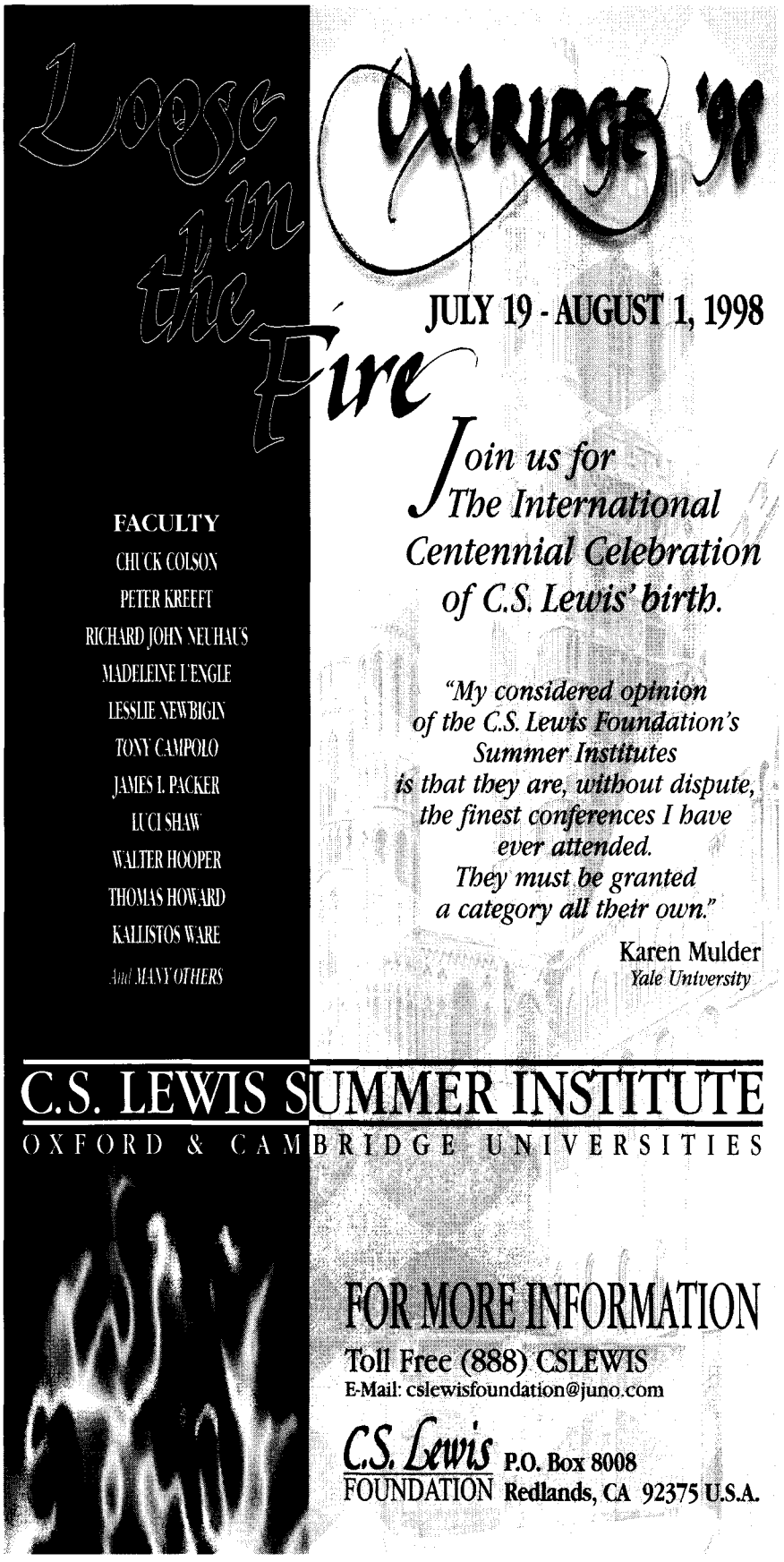
ingly, the most damaging criticism of any scholarly method is to say that it ignores something.

But this is an odd move to make. Obviously, McCutcheon's own preferred program in the study of religion leads him to ignore various things. He has no time, for example, for arguments about God's nature or existence, or about whether there are any necessary truths. The truth is that all intellectual enterprises inevitably ignore some possibilities in favor of looking at others, and so it can hardly be a criticism of any particular enterprise to point out that it does this. If McCutcheon had no other arguments in support of his recommended program and against ahistorical essentialism, it is hard to see why anyone would take his recommendation of it seriously.

But he does offer another, broadly ethical, argument for the desirability of his program. McCutcheon thinks that if you're an ahistorical essentialist when you study religion you will abstract both those you study and yourself from "socioeconomic and historical particularity" and turn them and yourself into "generic, disembodied minds . . . easily quantified and—on the geopolitical scale at least—governed." This, says McCutcheon, is part of the process of alienation, a process that removes agency and specificity from particular human subjects, makes of them tokens of a particular type (perhaps the type "religious believer") and thus commodifies and subjugates them.

This is a puzzling argument—if, indeed, it is an argument at all. A connection is asserted, but not developed with anything like conceptual precision. It's hard to see just why McCutcheon thinks the connection obtains, especially since the institutional arrangements that provide a safe haven for his despised ahistorical essentialists (the modern university) are precisely the same, economically and structurally speaking, as those that provide a safe haven for him and his beloved naturalists. Given his own views about the importance of paying at-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tention to the institutional arrangements that harbor and make possible any intellectual enterprise, McCutcheon ought to think that when these arrangements are identical, strictly intellectual or conceptual differences are relatively insignificant. If the institutional location of ahistorical essentialists contributes to alienation, why doesn't that of naturalists? The locations are, after all, the same, and someone who is really interested in the significance of the material conditions of the possibility of holding any view (as McCutcheon claims to be) ought to worry when the victory of one view over another makes no discernible institutional difference. If the institutions that harbor ahistorial essentialists are intrinsically alienating, replacing them with naturalists in the same institutions won't have much effect—or so McCutcheon ought to think.

There's another oddity about the ethical argument. It claims that thinking there are tokens of the type "religious believer" or "lover of God" has the alienating consequences mentioned, and that this is because it essentializes. But why should the same not be true of thinking that there are tokens of the type *homo economicus* or *homo politicus* (which McCutcheon does think)? Why isn't this also essentialism, and why doesn't it also have deleterious effects upon those about whom it is thought?

A final oddity about McCutcheon's program is the extent to which it exhibits precisely the blindness against which it inveighs. McCutcheon criticizes essentialist scholars of religion (Mircea Eliade and Wilfred Cantwell Smith, among others) for being insufficiently aware of the complex connections between their theoretical views and the institutional, political, and economic setting that makes the development of these views possible, and which is in turn supported and validated by these views. But his book shows almost no awareness of the relations between the intellectual program he advocates and its institutional and political setting. It is certainly correct that "the mid-twentieth-century discourse on sui generis religion and the rise of new forms of political, economic, and military hegemony are intimately related"; it is correct, too, that making this fact explicit is helpful in many ways. But to what forms of hegemony is McCutcheon's program related? For what institutional unpleasantnesses and oppressions is it both lackey and paid theorist? McCutcheon doesn't even ask: he seems to think that his work and the kind of work he recommends are immune from such connections. But this is exceedingly odd given the fact that his book argues that there are always such connections, and that they ought always be paid attention to.

WHAT MCCUTCHEON WANTS is for scholars to study religion by producing nothing other than a "tactical, oppositional discourse." By this he means a discourse committed only to historicizing (showing the local and contingent historical location of) that which it studies. He thinks it possible to do this in such a way that the scholar who does it makes no claims, either explicitly or implicitly, about transhistorical, unverifiable matters of fact or value (such as the claim that God exists). But to think that such a neutral, tactical discourse is available is the last illusion of the positivist; McCutcheon's own work is riddled with ethical and metaphysical convictions, some explicit and more implicit. This is inevitable, but its denial is either disingenuous or blinkered.

If McCutcheon were able to recognize his search for a merely tactical discourse as a quest for an illusion, the scales might fall from his eyes and he might come to see that everything is, in the end and in the beginning, theology. This is in fact the charitable way to read his book: as prolegomena to theology. The only other way to read it—probably too uncharitable—is as a tissue of self-aggrandizing confusions.

What We Are and What We Ought To Be

THE MORAL GAP: KANTIAN ETHICS, HUMAN LIMITS, AND GOD'S ASSISTANCE. By JOHN E. HARE. *Oxford University Press. 292 pp. $45.*

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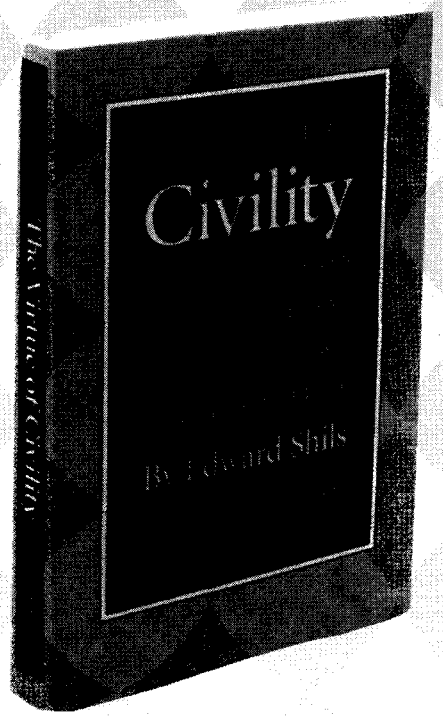

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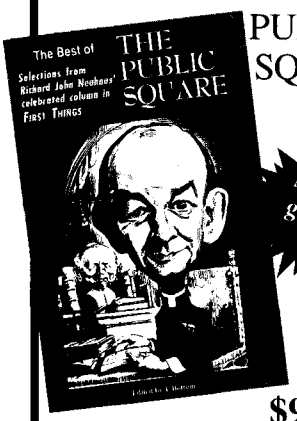

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involves a proclamation: It announces what God has done to help weary and overburdened human beings. "The Sovereign Lord has given me an instructed tongue," Isaiah's Servant of the Lord proclaims, "to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught." "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened," Jesus urges, "and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Yet this proclamation resonates only for those who feel weary and overburdened. Promises of help and mercy are heeded only by those who know they are helpless or guilty or weary or sick. For anyone else, they fall on deaf ears. The biblical message has virtually no chance of really being heard, then, if its apologists cannot convince its intended hearers that they are indeed part of the audience to whom this Good News is being proclaimed.

Until quite recently, most professional philosophers have been among the deafest of the deaf. John Hare's new book attempts to give them—and especially the moral philosophers among them—reasons to listen again. But he is also writing for Christians who are not professional philosophers. For he wants them to be able to take advantage of the opportunities now open for academic philosophy and traditional Christianity to engage in constructive dialogue, and he hopes to help them to see how even their understanding of the moral life has been influenced by moral philosophy.

Those interested in the intersection between religion and public life have particular reason to the thankful for Hare's book. For he argues that much contemporary moral thinking is incoherent because it has abandoned its Christian roots.

MARK R. TALBOT *is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Wheaton College.*

HARE'S THESIS is this: most contemporary moral philosophers, no matter where they stand religiously, take the human moral situation to involve three essential elements. First, there is the overriding demand of morality upon each of us to think and to act in a particular way. (For Hare, this essentially means that each of us should be as concerned for others as we are for ourselves.) Second, there is the fact that we are unable on our own to think and to act this way. And, third, there is the inevitable postulation of some "at least possible being" who makes and meets the moral demand, and who is thus the ultimate source of its authority.

The "moral gap" is the inevitable distance we find between what we can and what we should think and do. So the effect of moral philosophy's typical view of morality "is that it makes the feeling of guilt and the desire to avoid its pain into a primary motivator of the moral life." And, consequently, if we take morality as seriously as moral philosophers think we should, we grow weary of the objective demand that it puts upon us and of the subjective burden of always feeling guilty about what we have improperly thought or done.

Now this way of construing the human moral situation, Hare says, should strike us as odd. Why should morality be something other than "a paradigmatically *human* institution"? Why should it prescribe a way of life that is too hard for us? Why don't most contemporary moral theorists construct theories that fit the actual capacities of human beings?

Hare thinks it is because most contemporary moral thinking is still influenced by traditional Christian doctrine and involves the partial survival of a moral viewpoint that clearly made sense when most people actually believed "in a perfect and infinite moral being," whom human beings imperfectly resembled, and "who created us to resemble him more than we do." In Christianity, our weariness in the face of the moral demand, as well as our burden of feeling guilty about

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failing to meet it, are addressed by the Good News that God in Christ has done what is necessary for us to begin to live lives pleasing to Him. The Christian proclamation, in other words, declares that the Being assumed by morality's third element actually exists and that, for those who believe in Him, He actively intervenes to change the moral incapacity recognized by the second element so that their capacities, with His assistance, become adequate to the demand expressed by the first. Contemporary three-element moral theories that abandon traditional Christianity, and then put nothing comparable in its place, make no clear sense.

Because Hare is himself a very careful moral philosopher, he bites off only what he can chew. Consequently, he neither assumes nor claims to show that moral philosophers are right when they construe morality in the way most of them do, nor does he attempt to show that traditional Christianity is the only way to bridge the moral gap. Rather, he takes his task to be merely to show that the secular alternatives to the Christian solution are implausible as they now stand.

On his way to establishing that, Hare does several other good things. He stresses, for instance, how much of modern philosophy (and especially of Kant's philosophy) is unintelligible unless the Christian commitments of its writers are taken seriously. He gives us an illuminating reading of Kierkegaard's *Either/Or* which emphasizes that the weariness of the aesthete's pleasure-seeking life can be overcome only by embracing the principledness of the ethical life, and, following that, that the burden of the principled ethical life can be overcome only by embracing the freedom of the Christian life.

That freedom depends on seeing our salvation and sanctification as accomplished through our ongoing incorporation into Christ and the Church which is His Bride. It is this incorporation, Hare argues, that gives us the power to think and to act as we ought. In Christian doctrine, "the life into which we are incorporated is stronger, . . . 'abler,' than our lives on their own. . . . What God intends is for us to be vessels of his grace to each other; and this grace of his coming through each other helps us to live in a way that pleases him." There is also a fine chapter on forgiveness that helps us to understand how we may overcome the burden of our pasts and thus begin and sustain this life together.

All told, this book can give anyone who works through it a better grasp of what it means to be moral and of how Christianity addresses the gap that even most secular philosophers find to yawn between what we are and what we ought to be.

Church and Academy

Theological Education in the Catholic Tradition: Contemporary Challenges. Edited by Patrick W. Carey and Earl C. Muller. *Crossroad. 423 pp. $19.95 paper.*

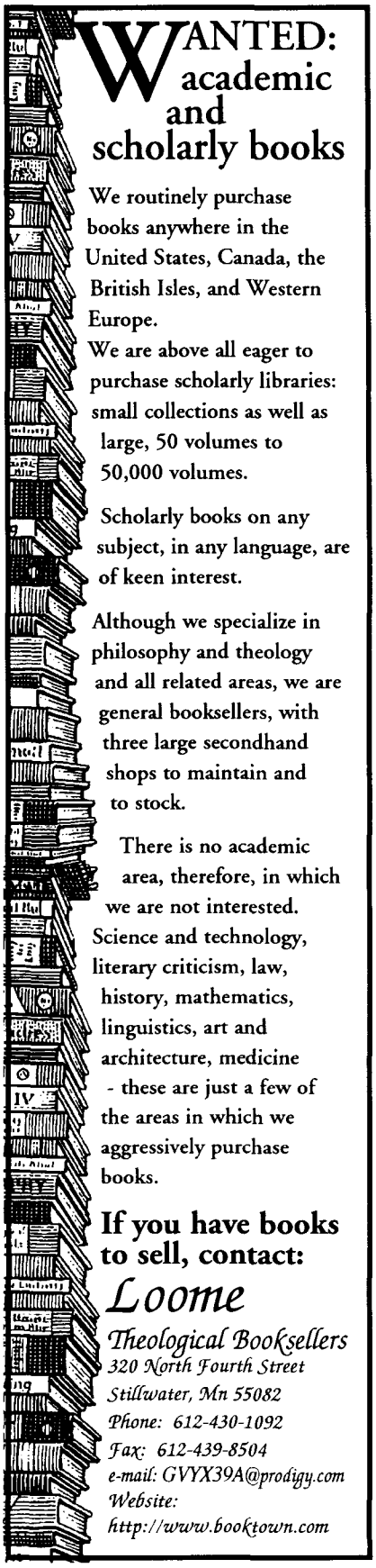
Being There: Culture and Formation in Two Theological Schools. By Jackson Carroll, Barbara Wheeler, Daniel Aleshire, and Penny Long Marler. *Oxford University Press. 290 pp. $36.*

Reviewed by
James Tunstead Burtchaell

These two volumes, taken together, illustrate the dilemmas of Christian theological education—Catholic and Protestant alike—in our time.

The first of them, a collection of essays on the Catholic situation edited by Patrick W. Carey and Earl C. Muller, originated at a symposium at Marquette University in 1995. About half of the twenty-six papers deal with problems of method: how to integrate Scripture or history or liturgy or spirituality with theology; how to serve African

James Tunstead Burtchaell, C.S.C., *is the author of* The Dying of the Light, *forthcoming from Eerdmans.*



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Americans and Hispanics; how to survive the mediocre funding at most Catholic institutions; how to maintain the peace between bishops and theologians. These are constructive and learned essays, and offer evidence of a durable effort to restabilize theology after the backwash of Vatican II.

More problematic are the papers that ask how Catholic theology can exist on peaceable terms at Catholic universities and colleges that claim full membership in the Academy, which all authors agree is an Enlightenment project that regards religion—especially Christianity, and most especially Catholicism—as intellectually trivial or mischievous. With only a few exceptions, such as Matthew Lamb, Joseph Komonchak, and Robert Imbelli, the authors are upbeat about bunking in with the Academy. An early cue to their formula for respectable survival is indicated in the title: they want to teach theology "in the Catholic Tradition," which is going to be much less offensive than teaching Catholic theology. How to get away with it? It must be presented as a discipline like any other, a "slice of the humanities pie," "critical of and responsible to the elements of our heterogeneous culture," taught by practitioners whose loyalty to the human community trumps their loyalty to the Church, and who are ready to promise that they would never dare assume a "distinctive cognitive stance."

When they approach the all-important issue of recruiting a faculty, the symposiasts blanch at any suggestion that a devout and inquiring Catholic faith could be an academic credential for appointment. One administrator flinched when another "provocatively" called for "the continuing presence of a predominant number of Catholic intellectuals" on the faculty, but was put at his ease when assured that all this meant was an "interest" in what Catholics think about. Several agree that hiring interviews are the critical moment for recruiting a faculty of intellectual faith, but their fear that federal laws make "personal questions" about religious faith inappropriate means in practice that while interviewers may be eager to lecture candidates about the university's "vision statement," they are hesitant to probe the candidates' own vision. Since Catholic colleges and universities have for some time now been showing preference for candidates from graduate programs that exclude faith as an intellectual consideration, it is admitted that "there comes a point at which we must ask whether we are losing the critical mass which makes the institution authentically Catholic." The

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knowledgeable reader can only agree, but would add that the "point" came some decades back, and all the "asking" ever since has been the standard analgesic for what was already irrevocably lost.

There is a widely shared assumption that communal faith is a dubious accessory for a theologian: it puts one at risk of intrusive and unlettered bishops, yet offers no compensatory theological advantage. Only Francis George points out the folly in this: "Faith then is no longer the basis of life but something added to it. Catholicism becomes 'our tradition' rather than the vehicle for the Tradition that unites us to Christ."

JACKSON CARROLL's sociological work has interested itself in the ministerial profession, and in the ideological divisions among Protestants. Those interests combine in a new collaborative field study, *Being There,* a study of two Protestant seminaries, anonymously tagged "Mainline" and "Evangelical."

The authors spent three years repeatedly visiting the two schools, residing on campus, sitting in on classes and on student interest and advocacy groups, schmoozing, and interviewing dozens of faculty and students at length. The narrative chapters read fairly and engagingly: even-handed despite Carroll's better "feel" for the liberals.

Mainline, whose sponsorship by a denomination has minimal effect on its ideological orientation, lives by the abiding conviction that "God's intention for the world is that all should have access to its resources. . . . Structures and attitudes that deprive some groups of the goods to which they have a right are deeply sinful." And the students are made painfully conscious of the faculty's judgment that oppression and injustice on grounds of race, gender, class, and sexual orientation are sins characteristic of mainline Protestant congregations. The faculty at Evangelical, by sharp contrast, teach that "God's plan for the world and the redemption of human life is an orderly and reasonable" and biblical one. In return for their undeserved salvation and the gift of grace, the students there accept the mission to infiltrate secular society and win converts to a different, disciplined life.

The respective messages both hit classes of newcomers with the force of a Parris Island welcome. At Mainline every rookie is served with a presumptive indictment for unwitting injustice, sexism, racism, and homophobia: even the women, the students of color, the gays, and the lower classes are made to feel a little lousy about themselves. Up the road at Evangelical, newcomers are told from the start that there are no

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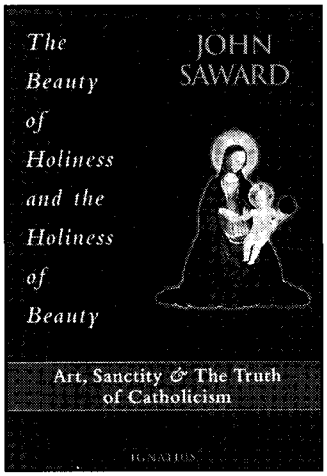

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denominations, and very few congregations, where the biblical mandates and the steadfast belief in God's unmerited decree of salvation are held up without embarrassment. Though the enrolling classes are already predisposed toward the respective ideologies of the two seminaries, the aggressively doctrinaire messages of the two campuses regularly elicit an initial reaction of confusion, complaint, and resistance. The researchers found, however, that the two dominant orthodoxies are so potent that they set the agendas for most of the interchange among the students themselves, and by the end of their programs they have largely aligned themselves with the campus doctrines.

THIS SEEMS TO have been facilitated by the presence at each school of a loyal opposition. At Mainline the dominant diversity-cum-social-justice ideology is under constant critique from an even sturdier feminist and liberationist minority among the faculty, who are more rigorous in their denunciations of the denominations. At Evangelical the dominant "mild generic Calvinism" is under judgment by a more rigorous Calvinist cadre, known locally as the Truly Reformed, who are more traditionalist about church order and significantly less enthusiastic about missions and evangelism, since God has already predestined those to be saved.

Carroll's group sees the two schools as descended from the classical divide between Calvinists and Arminians. The two opposition groups are located in even more polar positions: the purists at Evangelical are more conservative, with Fundamentalist inclinations, while the purists at Mainline are more radical, with the sound and smell of Modernists. The more polar dissenters at either place seem to create a dynamic whereby the largest group of students eventually settle on the other side from them, more toward the center, as milder social activists or milder Calvinists.

What Carroll & Co. cannot offer yet is a longitudinal follow-up to discern what ideological effect comes from these graduates' subsequent years of ministry to those congregations for whose salvation neither school holds out much hope. Will they stand fast by what they took in at the theological schools, or will they slough it off in favor of what they can share with Godforsaken laypeople?

The book studies these two schools as not-quite-polar opposites. This reader sees them as not-quite-two-peas-in-a-pod. Both begin intellectually with strong dogmatic presuppositions (the study calls these "cognitive approaches" at Evangelical, but seems unaware how cognitive the assumptions are at Mainline). It is just that one school derives them from the political order; one derives them from the religious order; and both use them as filters to control what the Scriptures can be heard to say. Also, neither education is beholden to the Church, but they both work hard to persuade the students that it is their mission to judge and discipline the Church. And so we are back with Francis George: "Church then is no longer the basis of life but something added to it."

These two schools are not poles apart; they are islands on either side of a small archipelago into which Catholics have lately sailed and are looking for a friendly landfall. Good luck.

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The Center for Economic Personalism at the Acton Institute is pleased to announce the launch of its new publication, *The Journal of Markets & Morality*, dedicated to examining the ethics of economic activity. The first issue will be published in March, 1998.

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Apologetics Without Apologies

IS THERE A GOD? By RICHARD SWINBURNE. *Oxford University Press. 144 pp. $25 cloth, $9.95 paper.*

Reviewed by **Laura L. Garcia**

APOLOGETICS is experiencing a small revival these days, both within the academy and outside it, and Oxford professor Richard Swinburne has led the charge in the philosophical community with an outpouring of careful work over the last two decades. The project of natural theology, seeking what can be known of God by the light of reason alone, was abandoned and left for dead by many scholars in mid-century, assumed to be a victim of either positivism or epistemic relativism. Even those who continued to defend religious beliefs often con-

LAURA L. GARCIA *teaches philosophy at Rutgers University.*

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Sick of Being a Guinea Pig In a LITURGICAL Lab?

In many Catholic parishes today, the sense of the sacred — of mystery and majesty and even of worship itself — has largely been banished. The bells, incense, votive candles, and Communion rail are gone. The Tabernacle with the reserved Sacrament can't be found. Elegant statues of our friends, the saints, are locked in the basement, replaced by balloons, banners with greeting-card sentiments, and other dime-store decorations. The organ gathers cobwebs. The sanctuary has become a stage. And the kneelers are now being ripped out, the crucifix taken down.

It's virtually impossible to pray before (or after) Mass because of all the chatter and back-slapping. The Creed is left unsaid. Homilists pander with (unfunny) jokes and (not quite the latest) pop-psychology blather. The words of the liturgy are improvised upon by politically-correct clerics and lectors with weird agendas — God our Father becomes "God our Parent," the Son of God becomes the "Child of God," etc. And we must clap, clap, clap for the band and the liturgical dancers and the clowns — we aren't making a joyful noise unto the Lord, but only unto the (amateurish) entertainers.

In many parishes the primary purpose of the Mass has been transformed from receiving Christ and worshiping the Almighty into "celebrating community" — i.e., celebrating our wonderful selves. One influential liturgical "expert" has said the Mass shouldn't convey "a feeling of infinity or eternity or the world beyond," for it's really about "communal sensitivity" among parishioners. But touchie-feelie Catholicism — where the Sign of Peace seems to be the high point of the Mass — has no power or magnetism. Not many people get out of bed on Sunday morning in search of warm huggies.

Catholics who are alienated by trivialized or freakish Masses — who find St. Bozo's Parish dismal, doltish, and disedifying — often jump ship for an Evangelical church, or just stay in bed. Indeed, church attendance among Catholics has dropped from 70%, just before the liturgical experiments began, to 25% today! And today, two out of three Catholics don't believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist — which isn't surprising, given that *how* we worship *has a profound effect on what we believe about* the meaning of the Mass.

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tented themselves with showing that such beliefs are *rational* rather than that they are *true*. Swinburne insists on the stronger claim that theism is the most reasonable worldview in that it is more probable than any of its intellectual competitors.

Is There A God? provides a compact overview of Swinburne's case for theism, drawing heavily on his previous more technical volumes on the subject, especially *The Existence of God* (1979) and *The Evolution of the Soul* (1986, 1997). He intends this more popular treatment as a response to recent best-sellers promoting naturalistic atheism, especially Richard Dawkins' *The Blind Watchmaker* and Stephen Hawking's *A Brief History of Time*. Swinburne's background in the philosophy of science gives him an advantage in sorting out the legitimate science in these books from their questionable philosophical assumptions. Indeed, he turns the tables by arguing that scientific principles of reasoning point to theism as the best explanation of all the relevant data.

THE THREE COMPETING worldviews discussed in the book are materialism, theism, and humanism. Materialism attempts to reduce all explanations, even those involving persons and their plans and purposes, to inanimate causal explanations. Theism traces all explanations, even inanimate ones, to a personal explanation (in terms of God and his creative will). Humanism retains some personal explanations as ultimate (at the level of finite human agency) while leaving some inanimate explanations as ultimate also.

Swinburne offers four criteria, drawn from scientific reasoning, for choosing the best theory. First, the proposed law or theory leads us to expect many and varied events that we observe (and we do not observe any events whose nonoccurrence it leads us to expect). Second, it is simple. Third, it fits well with our background knowledge. Finally, we would not otherwise expect to find these events (there is no rival law or theory that predicts these events and that satisfies the first three criteria as well as the proposed theory does).

Applying these criteria to the three worldviews, Swinburne argues that theism wins because of its simplicity and its ability to explain data the other views leave unexplained. Though theism isn't predictive of new data, it resembles evolutionary theory in leading us to explain observations already made. The simplicity criterion carries a heavy burden in Swinburne's argument, as it recommends theism's appeal to one being with simple (infinite) properties over materialism's appeal to many ultimate particles with complex properties. But an even more crucial premise is Swinburne's version of the principle of sufficient reason: "The human quest for explanation inevitably and rightly seeks for the ultimate explanation of everything observable."

Theism explains *everything* we observe, argues Swinburne, including "the fact that there is a universe at all, that scientific laws operate within it, that it contains conscious animals and humans with very complex intricately organized bodies, that we have abundant opportunities for developing ourselves and the world, as well as the more particular data that humans report miracles and have religious experiences." Materialism and humanism leave many of these data mysterious, accepting them as brute facts, and Swinburne insists that this is intellectually irresponsible, since "the whole progress of science and all other intellectual enquiry demands that we postulate the smallest number of brute facts." Swinburne departs from the received tradition of natural theology by denying that God is a necessary being, so on his view God's existence is itself a brute fact. But if one brute fact is preferable to many, then theism still wins the explanatory sweepstakes.

THE BOOK IS at its best in the middle chapters, which treat the existence and order of the universe as evidence for God and try to show that the existence of evil does not count against God's existence. Discussions of miracles and religious experiences are so brief as to leave many unanswered questions. Swinburne does devote four pages to the miracles of Jesus as evidence for Christianity, a welcome departure from the noncommittal character of most philo-

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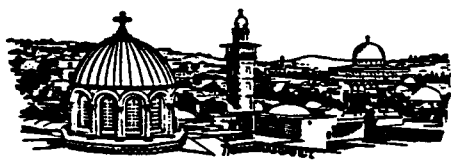

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sophical work in this area. He makes some surprising claims in the chapter on human beings, arguing for a strong Cartesian dualism of soul and body for humans, but claiming that dogs and cats have immaterial souls as well. That argument assumes, however, that these animals have beliefs, which is doubtful at best.

Swinburne recognizes the limits of his case for theism in his epilogue: "I am well aware of objections other than the ones I have discussed which can be made to almost every sentence which I have written." But life is short, he reminds us, and so we must act on the best information available to us in spite of our lack of certainty. Swinburne tells us in the final paragraph that if theism is true, "God in his perfect goodness will want to make the best of us: make saints of us and use us to make saints of others." Statements of this sort don't appear in analytic philosophy books every day. It's refreshing to find a philosopher of Swinburne's ability and erudition writing such a robust apologetic with no apologies.

Beyond Supersessionism

The God of Israel and Christian Theology By R. Kendall Soulen. *Fortress. 195 pp. $19 paper.*

***Reviewed by* David Novak**

This book is an impressive debut by a young Protestant theologian, R. Kendall Soulen. It began as his dissertation at Yale, but unlike most dissertations in theology, it is much more than a demonstration of what he has learned in the past (which is, nonetheless, considerable). It is clearly the beginning of his own theological trajectory into the future.

Soulen is explicit about his work belonging to a genre of Christian thought that can be termed "post-Holocaust." In fact, he puts himself in the company of such Protestant theologians as Paul van Buren and Clark Williamson, who have seriously considered how the event of the Holocaust challenges Christians to rethink their whole relationship with Judaism and the Jewish people. Like van Buren, Williamson, and others, Soulen wants to probe deeper into the history of Christian theology to discover how Christianity lost its proper contact with Judaism and the Jewish people and how that contact can be restored in a way that does not derail the Christian message (that is, the Gospel) in the process (something to be suspected in some Christians thinkers who have been moved by the Holocaust, but unreflectively so). Here the strongest theological influence on Soulen is Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the German Lutheran theologian martyred at the hands of the Nazis in 1945. Bonhoeffer's opposition to the evil of Nazism simultaneously led him to a reconsideration of the central Jewish element in Christianity (a point not seen in the equally anti-Nazi Karl Barth), although even he did not overcome some ambivalence in this area, as Soulen concludes.

Perhaps the main stumbling block to a better, and more fruitful, theological relationship with Judaism and the Jewish people has been the tendency of many Christian theologians to see the Christ event as the end of history. In this view, the Jews, like all the rest of the world who have not accepted Jesus as the Christ, are still struggling within history. Christians, conversely, are already beyond history and its vicissitudes and are living in eschatological time; hence they are to think *sub specie aeternitatis* as it were.

This, more than anything else, it would seem, has led to what becomes the bête noir of Soulen's book: "supersessionism," which in one form or another sees Judaism

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and the Jewish people as that which the triumph of Christianity over history has left in the irretrievable past. For Soulen there are three types of supersessionism: "economic," whereby the Jews are no longer needed in the divine plan for humankind; "punitive," whereby the Jews are seen as rejected by God because of their rejection of Jesus as the Christ; and "structural," whereby the true relationship with God is between God and humans per se and not between God and a singular people.

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Soulen is especially hard on Christian theology that has taken its lead from the "naturalism" of both Kant and Schleiermacher. That has been the attempt to make Christianity universally acceptable at the most evident level (for Kant in the immediacy of moral law to human reason; for Schleiermacher in the immediacy of the human sense of dependence on that which is greater). In this view, the "scandal of particularity," which became the scandal of *Jewish* particularity, was removed by an a priori judgment. Yet even Karl Barth, who attempted mightily to overcome the legacy of Kant and Schleiermacher and to restore Christian theology to a firmer scriptural basis, still accepted supersessionism in its least objectionable form, namely, structural supersessionism (which Soulen ably traces back to Duns Scotus). Barth did manage to overcome the punitive supersessionism that sees God rejecting the Jews on moral grounds and the economic supersessionism that sees God, in effect, breaking his promise to be in irrevocable covenant with the Jewish people. In the case of punitive supersessionism, God would seem to be playing by a double standard: for the sins of the Jews, rejection; for the sins of the Christians, forgiveness. And in the case of economic supersessionism, how can the Church believe God's promise to her if God has already broken his promise to the Jewish people? (A Jewish analogy would be: How could Abraham believe God's promise to him and his progeny if God had broken his promise to Noah and the world?)

SOULEN SEES THE Christian struggle with Gnosticism lurking behind all forms of supersessionism. Whereas the Gnostic "collapsing creation into the fall" had been more or less overcome since the Church declared Marcion her first heretic, what Soulen calls the "historical wedge," that is, "collapsing God's covenant with Israel into the economy of redemption in its prefigurative form," has more often than not been left unanswered—even unnoticed. Against this, Soulen wants to place greater emphasis on God's role as the Consummator of creation (that is, the One who sustains and blesses His creation), even if that means somewhat less emphasis on God as the Redeemer from the evil that has come into the world from inevitable ("original") human sin. Such replaced emphasis is a theological condition for coming closer to Judaism precisely because the question of redemption has been that which has made for the widest wedge between Judaism and Christianity. When one deals with God's beneficence *both* to Israel *and* the nations as being the generic commonality between the Jewish people and the gentiles, then the difference over who is God's instrument for ultimate redemption of the whole of humankind, Jewish and gentile, becomes a specific one. In other words, even now Judaism and Christianity might have more significantly in common than their very crucial difference.

In dealing with the centrality of God as the consummator of creation, Soulen revives the whole issue of providence. Students of Barth's theology should recall that Barth eliminates any sense of general providence by insisting that Jesus Christ and providence are identical (thus even rejecting Luther's distinction between the hidden and the revealed God). Barth did this because "general" providence seems too close to his own bête noir: natural theology. On this point, though, Soulen seems to be more Calvinist than Barth in presenting the notion of God's blessing creation both through Israel and through Christ as thoroughly historical, hence nothing like the natural theology that worried Barth.

In all of this reflection, Soulen seems to be constituting what I would call "the highest possible eschatological horizon." This comes out when he says, "The Church is

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not a community that issues directly into God's reign. . . . A hiatus separates the Church and God's eschatological reign." Following Berthold Klappert, he refers to the awaited Eschaton as "trans-ecclesiological." Clearly, when Christian theologians constitute a "lower" eschatological horizon, which usually has meant seeing the Eschaton as the *extension* of the Church's reign on earth, it has been most susceptible to the types of supersessionism so opposed by Soulen. For at this level, the "stubbornness" of the Jews, who at times of Christendom's worldly triumphs seemed to be the last holdouts to the inevitability of history, is most resented. It reached its low point not during the Nazi regime—which was not really Christian at all even though too many Christians were involved in it or sympathetic to it—but at the time of the Crusades. In our liturgy, we Jews still mourn the destruction of whole Jewish communities in the Rhineland that occurred as a result of that type of supersessionist fervor.

Conversely, when Christians regard themselves within history but not its masters, they become most like the Jews. (Although we Jews have our own thinkers with a low eschatological horizon and its correlative Jewish triumphalism.) In other words, we are both in nervous anticipation of an end time that neither of us can specify with certainty. In the present world of secularist triumphalism, which has marginalized Christians in the way Jews have been much longer marginalized, this point should be much more evident than it has been. After all, Roman pagans were as cruelly exasperated with the Christians among them as they were with the Jews.

NEVERTHELESS, the highest possible eschatological horizon is one that cannot be so high that it transcends the truth claims of revelation. Thus even though Jewish-Christian differences might very well be overcome in the Eschaton, they are still very real in this time before it. Jewish and Christian truth claims about the function of the Messiah here and now, specific as they are, do come into conflict with each other. Most significantly, we are governed by different norms in our respective relationships with God. In a very real sense, Jews have to believe that Christians have missed the point about how to wait for the end, and Christians have to believe something quite similar about the Jews. And even if Christians eschew overt proselytizing of Jews (as Soulen proposes), they certainly have to encourage and welcome Jews who want to become Christians—as Jews have to encourage and welcome Christians (and there are some) who want to become Jews. On both sides of the fence, this creates the painful problem of apostasy—Christians must be angry with such Christians just as Jews must be angry with such Jews. These inevitable facts will, of course, make for tensions, but the authenticity of any new Jewish-Christian relationship is energized by this tension as much as it is energized by the rediscovery of much commonality.

This last point about necessary differences between Christianity and Judaism is not explicitly raised in the book at hand. It has quite enough to do in what it set out to do. It is only after finishing this book that a reader can request its sequel from the author, one that will deal with this very question. But it is tribute to an author that a reader's request indicates how much he looks forward to the next installment of the author's theology.

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BRIEFLY NOTED

A Generation at Risk: Growing Up in an Era of Family Upheaval. By Paul R. Amato and Alan Booth. *Harvard University Press. 319 pp. $35.*

The view of most family scholars and professionals—and probably also of most adult Americans under the age of forty-five—is that parental unhappiness is worse for children than parental divorce: better for parents to part rather than expose their children to ongoing marital conflict and distress. Amato and Booth fundamentally challenge this notion. *A Generation at Risk* analyzes longitudinal child outcome data from a large national sample of families, seeking especially to isolate the independent effects of divorce on children from the effects of preexisting marital conflict. Amato and Booth conclude that only 25 to 33 percent of parental divorces today end up being better for the children than if the parents had stayed together. By contrast, about 70 percent of divorces represent the termination of low-conflict marriages that, whatever their shortcomings, are distinctly better for children than the reality of divorce. Moreover, Booth and Amato estimate that, as divorce becomes more socially acceptable, an even higher proportion of future divorces will involve precisely those low-conflict situations in which divorce is worse for children than the continuation of marriage. This reasoning leads the authors to what today must be considered a remarkable conclusion. For that 70 percent of marriages-in-trouble that are not fraught with conflict, "future generations would be well served if parents remained together until children are grown." And again: "Spending one-third of one's life living in a marriage that is less than satisfactory in order to benefit children—children that parents elected to bring into the world—is not an unreasonable expectation." This from two left-of-center social scientists, some of whose earlier writings have clearly suggested that one-parent homes are not especially harmful for children. It has been ten years since Norval Glenn of the University of Texas first observed that leading family scholars were becoming less likely to view current family trends as benign or even beneficial, and more likely to view them as socially harmful. A decade later, the shift among the family scholars gathers momentum.

— David Blankenhorn

Spirit of the Rainforest: A Yanomamo Shaman's Story. By Mark Andrew Ritchie. *Island Lake Press. 271 pp. $14.95.*

In the fall of 1997 Chief Shoefoot, a leading elder of a Yanomamo tribe in the Venezuelan rainforest, visited numerous American colleges and universities propounding a message not a few anthropologists and their student underlings were loath to hear: namely, that since a majority of the members of his village have embraced Yai Pada, the God of the Bible (literally, the Great Spirit), and turned away from the vengeful spirits traditionally served by the Yanomamo, they have enjoyed peace and relative prosperity—goods all too seldom enjoyed among the rainforest's "fierce people" who have not yet abandoned their old religious ways. This book recounts the conversion of Shoefoot's village. It is also a polemic against academics given to clucking that the likes of poor Shoefoot, who speaks through an interpreter, has been duped by highly educated Westerners. At one meeting in Northern California the chief was forthright when challenged. "I wish more servants of Yai Pada would come to my village and that the anthropologists would stay away," he said. "The anthropologists just make things worse." And in one moment of exasperation Shoefoot observed that nosy social scientists who discourage young Yanomamo from giving up their culture of revenge could someday find themselves at a spear's sharp end. Young people considering missionary work and students of the social sciences would do well to read *Spirit of the Rainforest.* All royalties from sales go to the Yanomamo.

— Preston Jones

The Beast Reawakens. By Martin A. Lee. *Little, Brown. 546 pp. $24.95.*

Just when you thought it was safe to say hello to the Baptist granny a few doors down, Martin A. Lee, contributor to the *Nation, Village Voice,* and *San Francisco Chronicle,* makes this chilling announcement: "While U.S. neo-Nazis and the religous right [differ] in crucial respects, they [see] eye-to-eye in their opposition to gun control, abortion, homosexuality, nonwhite immigration, and other shared concerns." Pretty scary, huh? Writing in the *New York Times,* Joshua Rubenstein notes that this book, which aims to recount the rise of neo-fascism since the Second World War, provides a "vivid survey of fascist resurgence." Vivid is one word for it, especially when Lee, an award-winning creative writer, connects dots lesser observers of contemporary America might have overlooked—like the Christian Coalition's "sympathy" for David Duke, for example. Then there's Pat Robertson's "paranoid ideology" to worry about. You probably weren't aware of the link between "Robertson's Christian soldiers" who in the 1996 federal elections sought to "take over the system from within" and militias who simultaneously "picked up their guns." (Robertson's support for Israel has "little to do with sincere affection for Jews," surmises Lee, who cites an article published in *Freedom Writer* rather than Robertson's own work.) All this evil has been "nourished by the odiferous compost of conspiracy theory," of course. Which reminds one—did he say odiferous?—that the only people more tedious than right-wing conspiracy theorists are their left-wing counterparts.

—PJ

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THE ARROGANCE OF THE MODERN: HISTORICAL THEOLOGY HELD IN CONTEMPT. By DAVID W. HALL. *Calvin Institute* (Oak Ridge, TN). 308 pp. $21.95.

The author takes no prisoners in this free-wheeling polemic laced with considerable wit, and all in the service of vibrant orthodoxy in the Calvinist tradition.

THE NEW PATERNALISM: SUPERVISORY APPROACHES TO POVERTY. Edited by LAWRENCE M. MEAD. *Brookings. 355 pp. $42.95 cloth, $18.95 paper.*

The title might suggest a polemic against recent welfare reforms, but this book is anything but. Mead, whose work has appeared in this journal, joins ten other public policy experts in arguing that the term "paternalism" should be rehabilitated, that the radically dependent poor desperately need programs that are unabashed in "imposing values" if they are to straighten out their lives. Contributors include Chester E. Finn and James Q. Wilson. A controversial and bracing book that makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of what we owe the poor.

JUDAISM AND MODERN MAN: AN INTERPRETATION OF JEWISH RELIGION. By WILL HERBERG. *Jewish Lights. 313 pp. $18.95 paper.*

Reprint of a classic work of modern theology, first published in 1951. Herberg, a former Communist and atheist, turned to God and became a devastating critic of contemporary political ideologies, which he described as latter-day forms of idolatry. Readers familiar with the thought of Reinhold Niebuhr will find here a pervasive Niebuhrian influence; Herberg, in fact, studied under Niebuhr and this work is in many ways a translation of Niebuhr's Protestant neoorthodoxy and political realism into Jewish terms. Though Herberg's religious existentialism never really connects with Jewish law and practice as it is lived and understood within the Jewish community, *Judaism and Modern Man* has nonetheless been instrumental in helping many Jews return to both God and Jewish law, as Rabbi Neil Gillman indicates in a new introduction for this edition. It remains a work of interest to all people of faith.

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

Critical Realignments

In this space I recently paid tribute to the late Francis Schaeffer, noting, among other things, his singular part in alerting evangelical Protestants to the great evil of abortion. Until the late seventies, I said, the Catholic Church had stood almost alone in publicly protesting the withdrawal of legal protection from the unborn. Objections from evangelical friends notwithstanding, the record is all too clear that evangelicalism was very late out of the starting gate on this question. In fact, it was running in the other direction.

In 1971, for instance, two years before the *Roe* decision, the Southern Baptist Convention passed a resolution calling for legalized abortion, and that was reaffirmed in 1974, one year after *Roe*. In October 1973 the Baptist Joint Committee—which then represented also the Southern Baptists—opposed a protective constitutional amendment, and joined the general agitation against Catholic efforts to "impose" their morality on the country. Finally, at the 1980 convention in St. Louis the Southern Baptists turned around, supporting an amendment "prohibiting abortion except to save the life of the mother."

Reporting on this development, the *Boston Globe* called it "a major earthquake within the nation's largest Protestant denomination," and went on to note: "The shock wave itself is important because the strong antiabortion position by the 13.4 million member denomination severely damages the argument that abortion is a 'Catholic issue,' and that efforts to end government spending for abortion amount to applying Catholic doctrine for the determination of public policy."

Today, of course, evangelicals join Catholics in the front lines of the battle against what John Paul II has called "the culture of death." Without this experience of "cobelligerency," as Schaeffer called it, in the cause of life, it is difficult to imagine consequent developments such as "Evangelicals and Catholics Together." Discovering common cause on abortion also contributed significantly to overcoming Baptist "strict separationism" on other questions, such as parental choice in education, that had historically been driven in large part by anti-Catholic animus. Once again we are reminded that it is difficult to overestimate the part that abortion has played in religious and political realignments of recent decades. The planting of the pro-abortion flag on the liberal side of the great liberal-conservative divide locked liberalism—including the liberal oldline churches—into the ideologically hardened position of the don't-give-an-inch proponents of "reproductive rights," while making it possible for Catholics and evangelicals to find one another in the formation of a new cultural majority.

More jaded students of evangelicalism might say that evangelicals were forced to choose between distinguishing themselves from the oldline churches or from the Catholic Church. In this view, being on the same side with the liberal churches was a greater threat to their identity as *evangelical* Protestants than was siding with the Catholics. However that may be, there is no doubt that abortion was and is the question precipitating one of the most important realignments in American religious and cultural history.

FT

What Then Is To Be Done?

What an awful tangle we're in about race. Forget our serially sincere (Jim Nuechterlein's fine phrase) President's ballyhooed dialogue on race. Multicultural effusions about the wonderful new world when there will be no majority or minority

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and we'll all be amalgamated into the gorgeous mosaic on the far side of the prescribed therapy of black accusations and white self-denigrations for the sins of slavery and racism—all this demeans a subject about which most Americans are surprisingly ready to get serious. If, that is, it seems believable to them that there is a purpose in raking over these questions again, if it seems there is something to be done.

There are other recent and more important twists in the racial tangle, such as Professor Glenn Loury's going very public in a number of forums about his disillusionment with conservatives because they basically don't care about black poor people. Loury of Boston University is a cherished contributor to this journal and has been celebrated as one of the most influential black intellectuals (yes, the adjective is unavoidable in this connection) in America. Predictably, those on the left, both black and white, have been quick to react to Loury's break with loud chortles of we-told-you-sos. Somewhat earlier, Loury and his friend Robert Woodson, who works with community initiatives in the inner city, very publicly disengaged themselves from the American Enterprise Institute because of its association with Charles Murray and Dinesh D'Souza, both of whom have written controversial books deemed to be less than sensitive to blacks as victims.

On the right, the editors of *National Review* do try to be sensitive to what they take to be the need of Loury and others to maintain a remnant of credibility among blacks by continuing to support affirmative action, albeit in a sharply modified form. The editors conclude: "Still, there is no excuse for conservatives to be (unconservatively) rude to Professor Loury—though his references to Charles Murray and Dinesh D'Souza are less than genial. There is no doubt that Professor Loury and Robert Woodson are indeed conservatives; but they might reflect upon the option of resisting cultural intimidation."

In the same issue of *National Review* is a long review essay by John J. DiIulio of Princeton University discussing four new books on race and making some of the points he has also made in these pages. Of particular interest is his evaluation of *America in Black and White* by Stephan and Abigail Thernstrom (Simon & Schuster), a recent scholarly work that documents in great detail the progress that blacks have made in recent decades. DiIulio does not deny the progress, but he takes the Thernstroms to task for slighting all that remains to be done, and for ignoring the crucial component in the possible doing of it. He writes of the book that it "makes nary a *mention* of the religious life of black Americans, rich or poor. But the evidence is growing that the only people who are now doing something to make inner-city blacks part of 'one nation, indivisible' [the Thernstroms' subtitle] are those who seek 'one nation, *under God*, indivisible.'" Actually, as I note elsewhere in these pages (While We're At It), the Thernstrom book does make a passing reference to religion in reporting the growing number of blacks and whites who belong to racially integrated churches, but it is very much in passing.

A Jewish Factor

Passions are running high in these disputes, and I have been caught in the crossfire, trying, irenic soul that I am, to hold friendships together. The circumstance is complicated by what might aptly be called a Jewish factor. It is not coincidence that some of the conservatives whose alleged unconcern most offends Loury and others happen to be Jewish, and are usually called neoconservatives. Jews tend to feel, with considerable justice, that they have historically sided with the black cause, that in recent years they have been singled out as the objects of frequently vicious black hostility, and that, in any case, there is really not much more they can do to be helpful. As is regularly pointed out, it is very dispiriting to be told that the national expenditure over thirty years of five trillion dollars to eliminate poverty and racism has only exacerbated the problem of poverty and racism. Some may conclude, not entirely unreasonably, that enough is enough.

There is another aspect of the Jewish angle, however. It is the ascendancy of the view, ably promoted also by DiIulio, that religion is the key to anything good happening among the black poor. There are relatively few black Jews, and it is understandable that Jews who are not black are inclined to think that, if DiIulio and others are right about the centrality of religion, doing something about the plight of the black underclass is chiefly a job for Christians, both white and black. Of the Thernstrom study DiIulio writes: "The tragedy of the book is that the authors are virtually silent about our moral obligation to do something—not talk, not debate, but *do* something—about those black Americans—who, to white Christians, are brothers and sisters in our Lord Jesus Christ—who have yet to make the climb."

He continues: "When it comes to motivating black and white Americans to respond, up close and personal, to the plight of inner-city blacks, debating 'racial injustice' is a sickly, sorry substitute for promoting religious morality and 'justification,' the Christian doctrine of the sanctification of the human person through the gift of God's life, which enjoins us to accept our social and economic fellowship with others, especially those whom Christ commanded His followers to love first, last, and always: society's poor, its children, its prisoners, its fallen, its feared." Protestants should overlook the muddled treatment of justification and sanctification. DiIulio is a Catholic, and you know how they are. But his point is clear enough. Both the motivation and the means for *doing* something are

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emphatically Christian.

The gist of the argument is convincing, I believe, but that doesn't mean that doing something is entirely up to committed Christians. DiIulio concludes by making very concrete public policy proposals to address the problems of poverty and race, including getting rid of affirmative action based solely on race, releasing nonviolent low-level drug offenders from prison, permitting prayer in the public schools, and changing tax laws to encourage contributions to inner-city community organizations.

Glenn Loury's anti-conservative blast and the contention over the Thernstrom book are forcing an urgent question. It is not enough to say that what has been tried hasn't worked as we hoped, and may have made some things worse; nor is it enough to expose liberal fatuities about remedying the "root causes" of poverty and crime. DiIulio writes: "So what if brain-dead liberals continue to make silly arguments about the overall condition of blacks and the state of race relations in America? So what if most young black males who go to prison are justly convicted? What is our endgame here? More debate about race à la President Clinton's commission on the subject? A continuation of our de facto three-part national urban policy: abortion (favored by liberal elites), incarceration (favored by conservative elites), and suburbanization and gated communities (favored, it seems, by almost everyone who can afford to move)?"

Explicit commandment, moral intuition, and simple self-respect combine in compelling the belief that there must be another way. Just believing that is prelude to doing something. The something in question is centered in religion that is both motive and means, and extends to public policy tasks that should claim the attention of all Americans. Who knows? Even Mr. Clinton's dialogue on race—if or when it moves beyond the old rancorous mix of invective and utopianism—might contribute to such a happy change.

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Very Selective Compassion

The story is laced with all the spins and counter-spins that one has come to expect from inside-the-beltway journalism, but it is, for all that, a reasonably fair account of one of the big developments in religion and public life. "Washington Discovers Christian Persecution" by Jeffrey Goldberg is the cover story in the *New York Times Magazine*, and it gives due credit to the heroic work of Nina Shea of Freedom House, a deeply committed Catholic who has been key to putting together a movement largely composed of evangelical Protestants. Goldberg obviously doesn't like Michael Horowitz of the Hudson Institute, accusing him of being a self-publicist, but he grudgingly acknowledges that the Jewish Horowitz, along with the Jewish columnist Abe Rosenthal, have shamed many Christian leaders into active concern for their persecuted co-believers around the world. "You're only allowed to sit out one Holocaust each lifetime," Horowitz pithily observes. Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council is also acknowledged as indispensable in building support for the cause.

These and many others are the players behind the Wolf-Specter Freedom from Religious Persecution Act, which the congressional leadership failed to bring to the floor last session, despite its promises to do so. The opposition is led by the Clinton Administration, which appears to have no goal higher than trade, backed by big business. Neither seems to be much bothered by a little, or even a lot, of religious persecution when there are big dollars to be made in places such as China. Also opposing the focus on religious persecution are some elite human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch, whose top man, Kenneth Roth, is worried about any connection with conservative evangelicals and Catholics who are not supportive of "women's reproductive rights," meaning abortion. Amnesty International, on the other hand, has cautiously welcomed the surge of concern about religious persecution, seeing in it an opportunity to greatly expand the general concern about human rights beyond the upper crust and dominantly liberal human rights establishment.

Working hand in glove with multinational corporations against the Wolf-Specter bill is the liberal National Council of Churches. General secretary of the NCC, the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell says: "That's got some history to it. When Christians act like their faith is preeminent, it can create problems. I hate to use this example because it's so extreme, but if you look at the Nazi regime, you see in it the philosophy of Christian superiority." Never mind that the coalition backing Wolf-Specter is opposing religious persecution across the board, not just the persecution of Christians, although Christians constitute the overwhelming majority of those persecuted for religious reasons in the world today. The more interesting aspect of the Rev. Campbell's view is that Nazism was created by an excessive devotion to Christianity. In sheer looniness that competes with her worry about Christians who "act like their faith is preeminent."

Despite the formidable coalition of Clinton's foreign policy managers, multinational corporations spending millions in lobbying efforts, and the liberal Protestantism of the NCC, Goldberg

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thinks a very major shift may be underway. He quotes William Schulz of Amnesty International, who says, "In this administration, trade always trumps torture when the two clash, and this causes dissatisfaction on the right and the left." Goldberg observes: "That dissatisfaction may well be a harbinger of a momentous political trend, the creation of a new alliance in which secular liberals and religious conservatives join together to force Washington to worry as much about moral issues as the insatiable demands of turbocharged capitalism."

Also noteworthy is the strong support for Wolf-Specter by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, making this yet another issue on which Catholics and evangelicals are united, leaving the oldline Protestants out in the cold. Some in the NCC and its liberal oldline churches complain that they were not made to feel welcome when the religious persecution initiative was getting underway a couple of years ago, and there may be something to that. The animosity of liberal oldliners toward evangelical conservatives is heartily reciprocated. The fact is, however, that Nina Shea, the National Association of Evangelicals, and others did reach out to the oldline denominations and were, with few exceptions, coldly rebuffed.

And no petty resentments about not having been on the A-list of those invited to the party can justify the bizarre position in which religious liberals—including some liberal Catholic publications—find themselves as apologists for an amoral foreign policy and systematic indifference to the jailing, torture, and killing of innumerable Christians and other believers. When it comes to Chinese oppression, for instance, it may be surprising to see the champions of liberal compassion pushing the line of Boeing and General Motors that trade trumps torture, but then one remembers the leftist aversion to cooperating with conservatives, and Paul Hollander's insightful observation that some atrocities are more "politically interesting" than others.

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REFUSE TO OBEY?

"Scandals to good order and discipline in America's armed forces, particularly sexual ones, proliferate and deepen with no end in sight. 'Scandal' means literally a snare, a trap, a stumbling-block which occasions a fall. At a Pentagon press conference announcing the results of the latest investigation of sexual misconduct, the body language of General Dennis J. Reimer, the Army Chief of Staff, could not have been more apt: there he stood, contrite and confused, with head bowed and shoulders stooped, military bearing brought low indeed. Defenders of America's national interests will not regain their composure until they identify as their true enemies the cultural priorities of postmodernism."

That is from an editorial in *Strategic Review,* the quarterly of the United States Strategic Institute. The subordination of the military to civilian authority, the editorial continues, is basic to our constitutional order, but that does not mean the abdication of moral responsibility. "The implication of this false notion of dutifulness is that soldiers are not also citizens, when in fact they are citizenship's noblest expression, prepared as they are to make the supreme sacrifice on behalf of the common good. The civilian architects of postmodernism thus insist on unhesitating enforcement of the tendentious rights of universal democracy, such as are now found in a decadent Western civilian society, while simultaneously demanding the total adjuration by citizen soldiers of the freedom of consent and informed debate. That is what is known as a logical contradiction, or if you prefer, tyranny, and it should come as no surprise that morale, good order, and discipline are at an historic nadir."

"The hour is late," we are told. "To face the adversary squarely, members of Congress and the military must begin by dispatching once and for all the practice of allowing women into combat forces." Secretary of the Army Togo West is criticized for suggesting that equal opportunity to serve must be put on a par with—or even given priority over—the military's capacity to fight and win the nation's wars. It is noted that ideologists view the military as a "perfect laboratory for social experimentation" in gender equality and other causes, but their biggest reason for undermining the armed forces is that they "represent the best concrete and only remaining example of the classical concept of the common good." If the military caves, the game is over.

There is considerable wisdom and an appropriate sense of urgency in the position of *Strategic Review.* At the same time, even those who strongly oppose the radical feminist assault on the military as recklessly imprudent and in violation of natural law may be given pause by this suggestion: "If Congress and the Pentagon will not act, officers en masse should simply refuse to implement integration further." If we read this correctly, this would seem to be advocacy of a refusal to obey orders. There are undoubtedly occasions when soldiers must in conscience refuse to obey orders. That is clearly recognized also in the code of the U.S. armed forces. But it is a morally momentous decision, fraught with consequences both for the ethos of the military and the well-being of the republic. The editors of *Strategic Review* undoubtedly know a great deal more about the military than I do. I am not prepared to say that the editorial is wrong. One cannot help but be impressed that in such circles the sense of crisis is so acute. At the same time, very careful thought

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must be given to whether the question of women in combat is a terribly wrongheaded policy that should be protested or a categorical evil that warrants, or even mandates, the refusal to obey orders.

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An Enclave of Conformity

A month in Rome, even when crowded with mostly tedious meetings, puts a person on aesthetic alert. I am frequently accused of optimism, a charge I vigorously reject since optimism is just a matter of optics, of seeing what you want to see and not seeing what you don't want to see. Hope is an entirely different thing, and I am strongly inclined to debunking the claims of those who seem to wallow in exaggerated claims about the singularity of our cultural decline. Admittedly, if one wants to hunt for indications of decline, we live in a target-rich environment. For many years I have found most particularly depressing the state of music and contemporary architecture. It may be true that "classical" music needs time to be recognized as classical, but does anybody really believe that much of anything composed in the twentieth century will a hundred years from now be thought to belong in the ranks of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, or comparable worthies?

St. Peter's Basilica is not the greatest architecture in the world; it is far from being the greatest architecture in Rome. But it is great. Taken as a whole or in its many parts, you want to spend time with it, pondering why this was done this way rather than that, marveling at the sheer craftsmanship. Then one goes just next door to the huge Paul VI Audience Hall, built only a few years ago, and about the only thing to be said about it is that it is huge. It is true, as art historians remind us, that the great churches of five hundred and fifteen hundred years ago borrowed from the more ambitious "secular" buildings of the time. But we also see in those churches adventuresome things that had never been done before.

Not so with the audience hall. There is no notable feature there that might not be found in a bank building, except for the big sculpture of the risen Christ surrounded by the detritus of a dead world and with the hair on the left of his head sticking way out as though he had had an accident with a can of hair spray. Other than that, there is nothing in the building to occasion a moment's wonder, except perhaps to a structural engineer. What is true of the audience hall is, with few exceptions, generally true of contemporary religious architecture.

I was staying at the North American College with, among many others, Roger Cardinal Mahony of Los Angeles, and he was waxing enthusiastic about the new Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels that they are building out there and hope to dedicate in the year 2000. I wanted to be impressed by what they are doing but I'm afraid I could not manage it. (Details on the cathedral are accessible at www.ola-cathedral.org.) Of course one can't tell everything from architectural drawings and models, but from the outside the proposed cathedral looks like a very big barge that somehow got beached in downtown Los Angeles, and the inside looks for all the world like a well-lighted warehouse. Maybe the inside will look very different with the furnishings in place, and crowds of people doing the liturgy for which the building is presumably designed. I sincerely hope so.

Mind you, I don't claim to be an expert on these matters. The architecture critic of the *Los Angeles Times* thinks the design is terrific. But then, his counterpart at the *Washington Post* gave a rave review to the design of the John Paul II Cultural Center in D.C., which evokes a sense of sacred mystery comparable to that evoked by a Russian nuclear power station. Of Our Lady of the Angels, the critic enthused that the design represents what the Italian Communist theorist, Gramsci, called "an enclave of resistance." What it is supposed to be resisting, I have no idea. Certainly not the spirit of an age that seems to be doing its best to squelch the rumor that the world is charged with the grandeur of God. I am more than open to the possibility, I fervently hope, that the building when finished will compel a change of mind. But at the moment it offers no relief from those depressing thoughts about the state of contemporary music and architecture.

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A Prospect Postponed

Bartholomew came and went, and left in his wake a deeply dispirited company of those who pray for reconciliation between East and West. It seems only a little while ago, when Paul VI was Pope, that the mutual anathemas between Rome and Constantinople were lifted. And it was a very little while ago that John Paul II issued the encyclical *Ut Unum Sint,* with its bracing hope that, as the second millennium has been the millennium of Christian division, so the third millennium must be the millennium of Christian unity. The hope was reinforced by the ascendancy of Bartholomew to Constantinople as His All Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch. He had lived in the West and had been

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actively participant in the ecumenical movement. His devotion to unity was well known.

But now everything has been put on hold, or worse. During his October visit he was to make a major statement at Georgetown University. The text of his speech was so virulently polemical that, at the urging of advisors, revisions were being made up until the last minute. But even then the final text offered naught for the comfort of those who were looking for a step forward. Bartholomew suggested that Orthodoxy and Rome are farther apart than ever. More than that, we are moving in different directions, for there is an "ontological" difference between East and West in the understanding of the Christian reality. His Western hearers were stunned, while the revanchist opponents of East-West reconciliation among the Orthodox were exultant.

A few days later, as the guest of William Cardinal Keeler in Baltimore, the word was that Bartholomew would undo some of the damage done at Georgetown. In Baltimore he did have magnificently cordial words for his Catholic hosts, but substantively the message was the same, if not more discouraging. "The members of the committee for theological dialogue between our churches have gathered here again. They have boldly reaffirmed their sadness that the dialogue has not yet borne the perfect fruit upon which all of us would, as brothers, share at the Lord's banquet. Still, we congratulate you for your good efforts and look forward to the day when we shall dwell as brothers in the House of the Lord." Which being translated would seem to mean: Nice try, fellows. Maybe we can get together in the Kingdom of God.

"We wish to reaffirm," said Bartholomew, "that this great work has not yet succeeded, not for lack of love between us." There is love aplenty, like "a light whose flame cannot be extinguished, not even by disagreement over organization nor jurisdiction." Why then has the dialogue failed? "It is by reason of an essential difference of how the mystery of the Church and salvation in her is realized," answers the Patriarch. Friends of unity point out that he said the work "has not yet succeeded"; he did not say it has definitively and irretrievably failed. They also note that terms such as "ontological" and "essential difference" do not necessarily mean the same in the East as in the West, but this has the appearance of grasping at straws. On the other hand, in view of what is at stake, no straw should go ungrasped.

Expectations Dashed

It is no secret that John Paul II's highest hope for his pontificate was the healing of the thousand-year division between East and West. With the dramatic steps that had been taken under Paul VI and then the collapse of the evil empire that had held captive so much of Orthodoxy, everything seemed possible. This is the sense of heightened expectations that pervades *Ut Unum Sint*. In that encyclical, the Pope went so far as to put on the table the question of papal jurisdiction, suggesting that it might be exercised as it was in the first millennium. When influential sectors in Orthodoxy saw how intent Rome was upon reunion, they took fright. The monks of Mt. Athos, who, while lacking formal jurisdiction have enormous influence, delivered a blistering salvo against any and all efforts at rapprochement with the West. Alexis II of Russia, reportedly under pressure from his synod, repeatedly snubbed John Paul II by calling off scheduled meetings. And it has been going downhill from there, as is evident in the chilling statements during Bartholomew's visit.

It is said that in private conversations Bartholomew urges his Western interlocutors to be patient and not give up hope. The role of the Patriarch is not comparable to that of the Pope, and it is explained that Bartholomew was perceived as getting too far out ahead. The notoriously fractious Orthodox churches were threatening to revolt unless he took their hard line during his U.S. visit. An additional explanation is that the end of communism has produced bitterly ironic results. Orthodoxy in Russia and elsewhere was deeply corrupted under the evil empire. It is generally acknowledged that no bishops were appointed without the approval of the regime, and not a few of them were active agents of the KGB.

At the same time, the Communists were great supporters of ecumenism, or so it seemed. For decades they controlled the useful prelates who were so actively involved in the World Council of Churches (WCC) and other ecumenical activities. It is ironic but perhaps not surprising that reformers in the Eastern churches who are bent upon purification and a return to authentic Orthodoxy view ecumenism as one of the evils that must be purged. Now among several Orthodox churches there is a strong movement not only to pull back from rapprochement with Rome but also to withdraw from agencies such as the WCC. This is joined to an attitude aptly described as xenophobic, in which "the West" is perceived as the source of spiritual, moral, and political corruptions beyond measure.

Rehabilitated Bridges

During the short time when reconciliation seemed to be on the horizon, the eastern rite churches that are in communion with Rome were given to understand that they were no longer the future. These churches (sometimes, and often pejoratively, called Uniate) have for centuries been viewed either as bridges to the East or as obstacles to reconciliation with the majority of Orthodoxy that is not in communion with Rome. *Ut Unum Sint* held out the prospect that Rome could treat directly with the separated Orthodox churches, but now some leaders of the eastern rite churches do not disguise their

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satisfaction in the apparent setback that has been dealt that prospect. So "Uniatism" may, for a time, have been given a new lease on life, but that is almost certainly more apparent than real. Constantinople, Russia, Greece, Ukraine, Albania—these and others constitute the center of Orthodoxy and it would seem that reconciliation, if it is to happen at all, must happen at the center.

The great Orthodox theologian and my dear friend, the late Alexander Schmemann, said East-West reconciliation awaits a pan-Orthodox council, and, he quickly added, a pan-Orthodox council is an eschatological concept. Another Orthodox theologian, who must remain anonymous, tells me that may be a slight exaggeration, but he says he has never been so discouraged by the leadership of Orthodoxy. "We have not one leader with the vision or courage or generosity to even begin to respond to the initiatives of John Paul II," he says. "For centuries we have demanded that Rome make the moves he has made, and now that he has made them we react like spoiled, suspicious, squabbling children." That may be too harsh, but it reflects the sense of bitter disappointment that is palpable also among some Orthodox.

Although, God willing, he has years to go, it seems John Paul II will not live to see the reconciliation between East and West for which he so earnestly yearns. Also among leading figures in the Roman curia, there are those who say his hopes were naive. The accusation of naiveté is a small price to pay for acting on the possibility of what might be, in accord with divine imperative and promise. John Paul II has laid the foundation for the time when, as he has repeatedly said, "the Church will again breathe with both lungs, the East and the West." We must pray that one day the Orthodox will be prepared to join in building on that foundation. Meanwhile the prospect so boldly set forth in *Ut Unum Sint* has not been abandoned, only postponed.

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Ungenuine and Gratuitous

The Evangelical-Catholic statement "The Gift of Salvation," published in the January issue, is receiving careful and, for the most part, positive reception. *Christianity Today*, the most influential evangelical publication, published it in full with a fine introduction by Dr. Timothy George, Dean of Beeson Divinity School. Some Baptists, however, have taken the position that, while the statement is splendid on justification by faith, it is also self-contradictory because it mentions unresolved questions such as baptismal regeneration, it being assumed by these critics that baptismal regeneration is incompatible with justification by faith.

Clearly, the Catholic participants in the discussion do not think the two doctrines incompatible, and it is the purpose of serious theological conversation to understand why that is so, rather than prejudging the question before engaging it. This Baptist criticism would also include Lutherans, Calvinists, and others who affirm baptismal regeneration and therefore, if the criticism is right, cannot consistently affirm justification by faith. Some Baptist opponents of "The Gift of Salvation" would seem to be elevating baptismal generation to the status of the doctrine by which the church stands or falls, in which case one might suggest that Baptists are decidedly outside the Great Tradition of Christian orthodoxy. And of course such an elevation would quite thoroughly shatter the community that is today called evangelical Protestantism.

There is also expressed Baptist unhappiness with the fear that "The Gift of Salvation" and similar unofficial initiatives have upstaged the official conversations taking place between Baptists and Catholics. Such unhappiness is thoroughly unwarranted. As Cardinal Cassidy of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity has publicly stated—and all the participants in "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" agree—this unofficial initiative is complementary to other conversations and, by virtue of being unofficial, has the freedom to help those conversations by scouting out questions in advance. One prominent Southern Baptist declares, "Justification by faith alone, if genuinely affirmed by Catholics and Evangelicals, would require repudiation of baptismal regeneration, purgatory, indulgences, and many other issues presently affirmed by Roman Catholic doctrine." The implication would seem to be unavoidable that the Catholics who signed "The Gift of Salvation" are not genuine Catholics, are dishonest, or are just plain dumb.

If that is the case, and if believable affirmation of the heart of the Gospel requires the Catholic repudiation of doctrines that Baptists think incompatible with the heart of the Gospel, there is obviously no point to further theological conversation. There is then no brotherly obligation to find out why Catholics who affirm what "The Gift of Salvation" describes as justification by faith alone is perfectly compatible with the other doctrines in question. With truly remarkable self-confidence, these Baptists just know in advance that they are not compatible. The course of greater honesty, not to mention humility, would be to say to Catholics, "It seems to me that you affirm doctrines that are incompatible with what you affirm in 'The Gift of Salvation.' Please explain why you believe that is not the case." Putting the question that way, one may not be persuaded by the explanation but

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one may at least learn something. That assumes, of course, that we all have much to learn.

Then there is another Southern Baptist official, also miffed at unofficial activities outside the orbit of hierarchical control (so much for the vaunted Baptist devotion to independence), who goes on to say that he has learned from official talks with Catholics that "unless one of the ecumenical councils decreed it or unless the Pope decreed it to be official dogma, no other Catholic signatures on a document make any difference and hence are gratuitous." So "The Gift of Salvation" simply doesn't matter. I don't know what Catholics he's been talking to, but by that measure, except for one infallible definition in 1950 and the Second Vatican Council, every Catholic book, episcopal statement, and papal document of this century is gratuitous and makes no difference. It seems all of us Catholics who are in any way involved in the theological project might as well pack up and take a permanent vacation.

The initial response to "The Gift of Salvation" by a handful of Southern Baptist officials is very disappointing. Fortunately, they do not reflect the positive reception of the statement among both Evangelicals and Catholics. This is connected also to the constructive rethinking that took place in the recent Synod for America convoked by John Paul II, where Latin American bishops took a giant stride in recognizing evangelical Protestants in their country as brothers and sisters in Christ. But that is part of a bigger story to which I will return at another time.

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ABSOLUTELY FREE

In a forthcoming issue there will be an extensive review of Rocco Buttiglione's outstanding book, *Karol Wojtyla: The Thought of the Man Who Became John Paul II,* just out from Eerdmans ($35). For the moment, a few thoughts on the afterword by those who so capably translated it from the Italian, Paolo Guietti and Francesca Murphy. There is the tricky question of the relationship between the writings of Karol Wojtyla, the philosopher, and John Paul II, the Pope. As the translators note: "Becoming Pope is not the best way to acquire fame as a thinker; it is more common, and generally easier, to achieve a (sometimes justified) philosophical respectability by getting into trouble with Popes and other powerless authorities." A still more serious factor is noted by Buttiglione: "The criteria and the hermeneutical methods of philosophical thought differ from those which can be used to interpret the Pope's teaching, which have as their immediate antecedents not the thinking of the philosopher Wojtyla, but the acts of his predecessors and the entire Magisterium of the Church in its historical development."

Yet a connection between the philosopher and the Pope there certainly is. Guietti and Murphy comment on a much earlier work by George Hunston Williams, *The Mind of John Paul II,* with its suggestion that, because Wojtyla was a Pole writing under a totalitarian regime, he did not understand the American mind and the principles of the free society. The translators think the opposite may be the case. "It appears after reading Buttiglione," they remark, "that Wojtyla does not understand anything *but* freedom and its relationship with the truth, which can be presented *freely* only to a person." The reference, of course, is to *The Acting Person,* Wojtyla's seminal work written during the years of Vatican Council II.

They continue: "From a political point of view Wojtyla knows that relativism, the dismissal of truth, leads to the primacy of power and political tyranny. We could say that he defends truth in order to save freedom. In other words, it seems that he values freedom more than truth, and is ready to subordinate the rights of truth to freedom, which is the most basic truth of the dignity of the person. The most important truth for him seems to be a person's freedom. . . . It is with regard to religious freedom, or freedom of religion or freedom of conscience, that traditionalists may find Wojtyla's understanding to be far too American. The late Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre described in words and pictures the victory of freedom (liberalism) over truth as the defeat of true European and good French traditions by the American way of life. To an integrist mind 'religious freedom' triumphed over the last of its opponents with Vatican II. Wojtyla's thesis on religious freedom would therefore be the obsession of a brilliant young philosophical mind which was prematurely exposed to the revolutionary spirit of Vatican II."

More Polish than Jeffersonian

So it may seem, but there is much more to it than that. Those who have lived under regimes of unfreedom may understand freedom much better than those who take freedom for granted. There may appear to be a smooth fit between Jefferson's idea of religious freedom and the declaration on religious freedom adopted by the Council, *Dignitatis Humanae.* "The two doctrines may coincide *materialiter,* as an Aristotelian scholastic would put it, but not *formaliter.* The American and Polish bishops may both have voted for *Dignitatis Humanae,* but they did so for different reasons." The American Founders, and Jefferson in particular, were motivated by the desire to liberate politics from religion, while Wojtyla and the Council Fathers wanted to liberate religion from political power. That puts it too simply, I think, but there is an

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important kernel of truth there.

Wojtyla understood (and understands) that religion is a public reality with political implications. That is why, as John Paul II, he has spoken so often of the insidious connection between a thoroughly secularized democracy and "a thinly disguised totalitarianism" (the last phrase from his encyclical *Centesimus Annus*). As Guietti and Murphy put it, "The disappearance of religion is the ultimate victory of totalitarianism, a victory which is more powerful than a military conquest because it subjugates a nation from within. . . . When absolute truths, even moral and religious absolutes, are lost, then even a hierarchy of relative values is relative. Relativism consumes itself; where there are no absolutes, nothing can be said to be 'better than,' not even the good of the majority against a scratch on a tyrant's finger. Someone needs to be the guardian of absolute truth, in order to save relative values and the importance of their relativity, so that the relative needs of the most powerful members of society do not become absolute by virtue of their power, but are still kept in their apparent and real relativeness."

Relativ*ism*, of course, is a danger much lamented. But the assertion of the absolute is not to displace relativity. On the contrary, by asserting the absolute, which is the role of religion, the relativity of truths that are less than absolute is protected. As in, for instance, one nation "under God." This, the translators observe, "is the meaning of Wojtyla's antitotalitarian philosophy of freedom developed in the context of the Vatican II declaration *On Human Dignity*. While religion is too powerful to allow politicians to control it, the alternate of lack of religion is an illusion. Political agnosticism, the belief that the politician deals with relative things, is possible only where people kneel to something higher than political power." The alternative to political agnosticism is politics as religion, which is the error appearing in this century on both the left and the right, as in National Socialism and Communism. It is the error still perpetuated today by various movements subscribing to the maxim that the personal is the political, and vice versa. Posited against that is the free person (the acting person) in the freedom of his relationship to the absolute, which means, ultimately, in his relationship with God.

Among the most insightful discussions in Buttiglione's book is Karol Wojtyla's wrestling with the existentialism of the young Sartre. The earlier Sartre arrived at the point where the "I" could only be sustained in the face of nihilism (thus his famous "hell is other people"). Sartre had reached a dead-end, and many Christian thinkers at the time thought that he would have to move in the direction of religion to achieve a higher synthesis. But of course, as it turned out, Sartre sought that synthesis in Marxism. It remained for Wojtyla to take the path that Sartre rejected, moving existential personalism toward its fulfillment in Christian faith.

Guietti and Murphy put it this way: "Sartre maintains that if there is a God there cannot be freedom; therefore, since it is evident that we are free, there must be no God. Wojtyla contends that if there is a God there is freedom, and the history of this century demonstrates the factual connection between atheism and maximal oppression of freedom. Wojtyla's anthropology of freedom is as modern as Sartre's. For Sartre, being religious is the opposite of being free; for Wojtyla, just as for Pico della Mirandola, being religious and being free are one and the same." I assume our reviewer will concentrate on Rocco Buttiglione's most persuasive analysis in *Karol Wojtyla: The Thought of the Man Who Became John Paul II*, but the suggestive afterword by the translators is also something not to be missed in this remarkable book. For the philosophically and theologically minded, it will remain indispensable, even after we are blessed with what promises to be the definitive biography of John Paul II and history of this pontificate by George Weigel, which is scheduled for 1999.

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While We're At It

■ Would you believe this? Of course you would. A pamphlet, "Guide to Bias-Free Communication," put out by the State of Georgia's "Supreme Court Commission on Equality" and endorsed by Chief Justice Robert Benham. It's filled with linguistic contortions of the PC kind. Item: "The judge should allow counsel to present *their* cases in *their* own styles." It doesn't say what to do if there's only one counsel and he has only one style. Perhaps he is to just go along with the game of multiple personalities. Item: "Foreman" is out, "Foreperson" is in. Foreperson? If you think that sounds just a bit salacious, confession is Saturday at four. And here I was just reading this article on how the South is the country's best hope for resisting the sundry sillinesses generated by the decadent coasts. But of course the Supreme Court is based in Atlanta, which, I'm told, has the motto, "The city that's too busy too think," or something like that. I notice also that the great seal of the Supreme Court of Georgia is emblazoned with "Wisdom, Justice, Moderation." So where are "Inclusivity" and "Sensitivity"? Just wait.

■ According to Dr. Pieter Admiraal, leader of the euthanasia movement in the Netherlands, Americans may be just too immature to establish a similarly sensible approach to the subject. He says that 84

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percent of Dutch doctors approve of euthanasia, while the American medical world is still reluctant. American doctors, for instance, feel better about prescribing pills than giving lethal injections because it makes them feel less directly responsible for the death. Admiraal dismisses the distinction as "so silly" and "so American-style," and he may have a point there. The story in the *American Medical News* observes that Holland and the U.S. are unlike in other ways: "And finally, the two countries have major cultural differences. The United States, for example, is a fairly religious country. But in Holland, he said, 55 percent of residents describe themselves as 'irreligious' or 'atheistic.' Even the Catholic Church there is more tolerant of the concept, he said, noting that he started performing euthanasia in a Catholic hospital 'with the help of two priests.' Dr. Admiraal noted with a laugh that polls show 80 percent of Americans admit they believe in angels, a belief shared by fewer than 20 percent of the Dutch. 'For us,' he said, 'there is no place for angels.'" It's a small world.

■ Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB) in Knightsbridge is the center of a remarkable spiritual revival among England's elites, and Cristina Odone, writing in the *Spectator*, doesn't like it one little bit. Inspired by the California-based Vineyard Fellowship founded by the late John Wimber in the 1980s, HTB and affiliated parishes are into barking, swooning, pentecostal laughter, and even "the Toronto blessing." Odone writes: "Recruiting takes place at drinks parties where, armed with a champagne glass and a cocktail sausage, dewy-eyed converts enthuse about Jesus Christ as if He were a particularly glamorous guest on the party circuit, and praise the Holy Spirit as if It were a fabulous, no-nonsense nanny who has taken charge of their spiritual upbringing. . . . By weaving spiritual lessons into the social routine of the well-to-do, the movement reconciles Jacob's ladder and the social ladder, the urbane and the devout." Such sniffingly urbane contempt for the devout is no surprise, but Odone says something more sinister is afoot. Wielding such wealth and social status, the HTB phenomenon threatens the established church by holding out the threat of cutting off funds if the Church of England does not move in a more evangelical and conservative direction. "Lord Runcie, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, has been overheard remarking that the HTB churches constitute the greatest danger to the Church of England," Odone writes. What Lord Runcie views as danger many others perceive as high promise.

■ A great defender of religious freedom, and a sometime contributor to these pages, is Douglas Laycock of the University of Texas law school. The first article he wrote on the subject was many years ago and was favorable to Catholics in a particular dispute. In the article, Laycock said in a footnote that he was not and had never been a Catholic. He circulated the article among colleagues before publication, including Professor (now Justice) Antonin Scalia. Scalia crossed out the footnote and wrote in the margin, "Never give the bastards any comfort." Laycock took the point to be that one should not have to disclaim Catholicism in the same way that he might disclaim any sympathy with the Ku Klux Klan in an article defending the Klan's free speech rights. He took out the footnote. In a more recent article, Laycock notes that he has over the years been suspected of being a Catholic, a Baptist, a Jew, and a number of other things, all because he defended the rights of these groups. So at last he comes clean, declaring, "I am agnostic about matters of religion. None of the claims of the world's religions seem to me either plausible or falsifiable." He goes on to insist that this is perfectly consistent with his determined defense of religious liberty: "An agnostic has no opinion on whether God exists, and neither should the government. But an agnostic also believes that humans are incapable of knowing whether God exists. If the government believed that, it would prefer agnostics over theists and atheists. Agnostics have no opinion for epistemological reasons; the government must have no opinion for constitutional reasons. The government must have no opinion because it is not the government's role to have an opinion." Douglas Laycock is an honorable man, and believers have good reason to be grateful for his fine work. Of course he's wrong in treating religion purely as a private and individual matter comparable to matters of "conscience," which ignores the real-life corporate and action-oriented nature of biblical religion. And I believe he's wrong in thinking that government's respect for religious freedom is sufficiently secured by the assertion that "the Constitution says so." That provides no answer to a number of questions, including the question, Why should we care what the Constitution says? Push come to shove, religious freedom is best secured by reasons that are themselves religious. But I certainly don't want to be too critical of Douglas Laycock, for that would be to give comfort to the illegitimate ones who do not share his admirable devotion to religious freedom.

■ Among us are millions of the walking wounded of the sexual revolution. The Medical Institute for Sexual Health recently convened the first National Leadership Summit on Abstinence, and some of the reports were startling. It is estimated that one in five Americans between fifteen and fifty-five is now infected with a viral sexually transmitted disease (STD). Adding those infected by bacterial STDs, such as chlamydia and syphilis, the number is probably one in four. Sixty-six percent of the newly infected are under twenty-five years of age and 25 percent are teenagers. While the public is generally

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unaware of the plague, STDs are potentially more detrimental to health than the use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs, all of which are attacked by massive media campaigns. Condoms are not the answer. They are ineffective against human papilloma virus (HPV), the cause of genital warts. HPV may cause over 90 percent of all cervical cancer, which takes the lives of eight thousand American women each year. Condoms offer little protection against syphilis or herpes. The latter infects an estimated thirty million Americans. These viruses are transmitted from skin contact and do not require the exchange of body fluids. A recent article in *Social Science Medicine* reports that condoms are only 69 percent effective in preventing the spread of HIV. The good news is that the abstinence message is getting through. Fifty-five percent of unmarried women age fifteen to nineteen had intercourse in 1990, and that fell to 50 percent in 1995. Among adolescent boys, 35.5 percent said in 1995 that they had had intercourse, down from 42.5 percent in 1990. Communities with the highest incidence of single-parent households also have the highest incidence of HIV, whereas communities with the highest incidence of two-parent families have the lowest incidence of HIV. Material on educating for abstinence is available from the Medical Institute for Sexual Health, P.O. Box 162306, Austin, TX 78716.

■ A private fertility clinic in Toronto, Ontario, will for a fee ranging from $6,500 to $9,800 weed out genetically defective embryos before they are implanted in the mother. "This is the beginning of the end of genetic disease," says Dr. Perry Phillips of IVF Canada. He says they can identify twenty-seven genetic disorders at present, including Huntington's disease and breast cancer, and the list will grow dramatically over time. "A lot of this is going to be eliminated. That's the dream of medicine. It's our dream. This should have the same impact antibiotics did to bacterial disease." The comparison with antibiotics does seem to elide the distinction between eliminating the sickness and eliminating the sick. Dreams and nightmares.

■ "Righteous Gentiles." The memorial at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem formally recognizes 13,618 (as of the end of 1995) who risked their lives in order to save Jews in the Nazi-occupied countries of Europe. Professor Berel Lang of the State University of New York at Albany has problems with the term "Righteous Gentiles." Writing in *Judaism*, he notes that "righteous" applies to those who do their duty. Jewish teaching does not require that people put their own lives or the lives of their families at risk to help others. The righteous gentiles, therefore, are more than righteous; they are heroic. Further, to say that they are simply righteous is to imply that all the other gentiles were unrighteous, which is not the case. Many, perhaps most, of them were simply doing their duty as best they understood it and as best they could. The current usage also lumps all those who are not recognized as "Righteous Gentiles" into the same category, thus obscuring the fact that some of them were wicked in supporting or actually perpetrating the extermination of Jews. Lang concludes: "To honor the heroic and 'More-than-Righteous' gentiles in no way diminishes the responsibility of the much larger number of others who were (as they then, and we too now, might be) less than heroic. Quite the contrary. To identify and honor those who are heroic means that the burden of being 'righteous' goes back to where it belongs, in the day-to-day life of ordinary people who are not and perhaps cannot be heroes, but who are nonetheless responsible for knowing and acting on the principles of common humanity. That is, for being righteous." The article makes an interesting case that we should begin to refer to the rescuers as "Heroic Gentiles," thus distinguishing them from the common run of Jews and Christians alike, who, like most of us, are less than heroic. While one may want to affirm Prof. Lang's intention, one may also question whether it is not already achieved by "Righteous Gentiles." The Hebrew phrase is *hasidei ummot ha-olam*, and my Jewish friends who know about these things say that it is understood that a *hasid* is by no means just an acceptably moral person. Thus the designation of the *hasidim*, the ultra-Orthodox groups found in Brooklyn and elsewhere. In English also, we surely do not refer to someone as "righteous" unless he is notably so. (Sadly, in our secular culture "righteous" is often taken as synonymous with "self-righteous.") In sum, *hasidei ummot ha-olam* in Hebrew and "Righteous Gentiles" in English would seem to mean something very much like "gentile saints."

■ I was struck by the assertion in a fine new book by Stephan and Abigail Thernstrom, *America in Black and White*, about the disappearing color line in American religion. The claim is that a majority of blacks attend racially integrated local churches, and the same is true of nearly half the white Christians in the country. That didn't seem quite right, given the number of blacks, their geographical distribution, and their concentration in almost exclusively black churches. So I wrote the Thernstroms and they kindly responded that they were relying on data gathered by the National Opinion Research Center's "General Social Survey" of 1978 and 1994. In 1978, 37 percent of blacks reported that some whites attended their church; by 1994 that figure was 61 percent. The change is no doubt due to the very big rise in the number of blacks living in suburbia. In 1978, 34 percent of whites said some blacks attended their church; and in 1994 the figure was 44 percent. So there has been change, but it is not all that dramatic, since only a family or two of the other race makes it possible for hundreds of people to say that their church is racially integrated. Nor, it seems to me, is

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it necessarily a moral imperative that the color line be erased in religion. Many people have said, among them Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that eleven o'clock Sunday morning is the most segregated hour in America. Of course, racial segregation against people's will is an odious thing, but there are many reasons—ranging from geography to styles of worship—why most blacks prefer to worship in predominantly black churches. This is reinforced by my own experience as pastor of a black Lutheran parish in Brooklyn for seventeen years. The goal of a color-blind society—which, despite its detractors, is morally imperative—does not mean indifference to cherished traditions, also in religion, that are closely related to race. In this connection, I note that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has once again reaffirmed the goal of having a membership that reflects the racial composition of the nation. This is nothing but politically correct posturing that apparently goes over well in Minnesota and Wisconsin. It is also deeply anti-ecumenical. The ELCA has obviously not consulted the National Baptist Convention or the African Methodist Episcopal Church about giving up 700,000 members. What the Thernstroms report is indeed an encouraging trend, but it is still very much a trend at the margins.

■ Beyond the English-American-Australian fringe, the Anglican communion is generally flourishing. Moving toward the next Lambeth Conference, provinces in Africa and Asia have talked seriously about excluding the American bishops of PECUSA from the meeting because of their theological and moral deviations, but that could hardly be done without busting up the entire Anglican thing. The natives, however, who are now the custodians of moral and theological sanity, are restless. It doesn't help that the Church of England is pondering whether to abandon officially, as it largely has in practice, the teaching that sexual intercourse is rightly reserved for marriage. A C of E bishop recently remarked in a debate on the subject, "All those biblical and theological points are undoubtedly interesting, but the fact is our children are living and having sex with people outside matrimony, and are we really prepared to say that they are 'living in sin'?" A theologian who was on the other side of the question responded, "His grace's observation has the merit of candor in suggesting that his position is that it is not nice to say that nice people such as ourselves and our children are sinners. This new version of 'the comfortable words' will no doubt be welcomed by some as a great relief, but, in the absence of sin and forgiveness and all they entail, it does rather leave the church scrambling for a reason for its existence." There's that old foundationalism again.

■ Poor New Orleans. Said to have the highest murder rate in the nation, the sidewalks buckling, the grand mansions on St. Charles Avenue falling into clammy disrepair, Bourbon Street reduced to hard rock and strip joints. A recent visit surrounded one with the sadness of the decaying world described in Walker Percy's *Love in the Ruins.* Antoine's, the fabled restaurant, is still a grand experience, and the cathedral is noteworthy, but there is little else that is grand any more about New Orleans. Then there was this in the *Times-Picayune:* the school board has adopted a policy against "retaining names of schools named for former slave owners or others who did not respect equal opportunity for all." So George Washington is out. Robert E. Lee School is now named for Ronald McNair, an astronaut killed in 1986. A school named for E. D. White, once the Chief Justice of the U.S., now bears the name of Langston Hughes; Thurgood Marshall has displaced Confederate general P. G. T. Beauregard, and Jefferson Davis has given way to the former New Orleans mayor, Dutch Morial. The current mayor, also named Morial, is rumored to have his eye on the high pedestal where there is still a statue of Robert E. Lee. After that is politically corrected, maybe the city will rent out the pedestal for the celebrity of the year. Princess Diana perhaps. It's not that the city has entirely lost its historical consciousness. The school board rule requires that schools keep their new names for twenty years. For a place whose chief appeal was its capacity to evoke another world, the erasure of historical memory does seem like another step in the city's determination to commit suicide. Soon only Percy's moviegoer will be able to see the New Orleans that formerly enchanted as a place elsewhere. "Equal opportunity for all" is undoubtedly important, but it hardly requires an ideological rectification of history that leaves a dank and disenchanted city obliviously sinking into the swamp on which it was once so audaciously built.

■ I always get in trouble when I say that the federal government is responsible for the death of more than eighty people, many of them women and children, at the siege of the Davidians in Waco, Texas. I don't like saying it, not least because it might give aid and comfort to the black helicopter crowd, but I don't know any more judicious way of putting the matter. (Along with many others, I believe the most accessible and accurate account of the incident is still the late Dean Kelley's "Waco: A Massacre and Its Aftermath," FT, May 1995.) At the time, the newly appointed Janet Reno earned media points for saying she took "full responsibility" for that catastrophe, but in fact that was accompanied neither by an apology nor by appropriate discipline against those immediately involved. Now an interview with Louis Freeh, director of the FBI, supplies what might pass for an approximation of the former. "The bureau had this sense that it could do more than it was really capable of. At Waco and

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Ruby Ridge [where Randy Weaver's wife and son, plus a federal marshal, were killed] we had a very competent hostage response team, but there weren't any hostages to rescue. These people *wanted* to be there." Later in the interview Freeh responds to the criticism that he is too candid in speaking about the FBI's problems. "A lot of people still say to me, 'Why do you say we made a mistake at Waco and weren't prepared for Ruby Ridge?' Well, my answer is: 'That's the truth.'" And that's a beginning, but "we made a mistake" is hardly an adequate response to one of the most brutal and deadly abuses of government power in American history.

■ A while back in the *Weekly Standard,* Christopher Caldwell took the *New York Times Book Review* to task for routinely assigning novels to other novelists rather than to critics. Not surprisingly, the reviews tend to be uncritical, as reviewers, believing that turnabout is only fair, anticipate the treatment of their next offering. In a similar way, the *Book Review* gave a new biography of Alfred C. Kinsey—he of the sexual revolution—to sex writer Richard Rhodes, who thinks the sexual regression of recent years to be one of the high points of human history. Rhodes acknowledges that Kinsey was a deeply disturbed person, a homosexual masochist who routinely seduced his graduate students and had his senior researchers engage in group orgies, among other perversities. But "genius" covers a multitude of sins. Rhodes is critical of the author, James H. Jones, for suggesting that Kinsey's research was marred by his prurient and exploitative interests. He does not deny Kinsey's motives, but writes, "Jones appears to cherish the quaint notion that good science is disinterested science, that a scientist must somehow contrive to avoid emotional investment in his work." Having sex with the subjects of one's research and otherwise behaving in ways that would today land one in the slammer does seem to go beyond what we would ordinarily think of as emotional investment in one's work. Rhodes is especially enthusiastic about Kinsey's work on homosexuality, "which contributed vitally to the march toward tolerance that continues today." He does not mention Kinsey's now notorious use of unrepresentative groups such as prisoners, he pooh-poohs Kinsey's often-stated purpose of overthrowing sexual constraints, and he completely ignores Kinsey's thoroughly discredited claim that 10 percent of the male population is dominantly homosexual. Commenting on Kinsey's work, the great theologian Reinhold Niebuhr noted his "abysmal ignorance of the complexities in the heights and depths of the human spirit." Rhodes is not impressed. Before he got into the sex business, Kinsey was a world-class authority on the habits of gall wasps. Critics of his sex work attacked his methodology, failing to note, says Rhodes, "the irony that the same methodology had merited praise when he applied it to gall wasps." Well, yes, but that was rather the point of Niebuhr and others: human beings are not gall wasps. It says here that Richard Rhodes is the author of *Making Love.* Yet another book that one is, with such strange ease, resigned to never reading. (I am open, just barely, to the possibility that the Rhodes review is intended as a parody. But that is to allow for an ironic reach that is without precedent in the *Times*' book review.)

■ It's too easy to say that Harvard hates America, as a book title of several years ago put it. It's simply that Harvard is married to an America very different from the America experienced by nine out of ten Americans. Here, for example, is the program of a recent conference, "One Nation Under God? Religion and Contemporary American Culture." There are two presentations on the spiritual significance of rock music, one on the cult of Princess Diana, several critiquing America's captivity to capitalism, one on Islam, one on gays, a couple on exotic fringe movements (including Scientology in Germany), and two on aspects of the Jewish experience. I don't know where to put Rita Nakashima Brock's "Beyond Eurocentric Religious Paradigms," but I could take a wild guess. This is no doubt fun stuff for academics with too much time on their hands, but this is "Religion and Contemporary American Culture"? It's not that the religious beliefs and connections of most Americans (oldline Protestant, evangelical Protestant, Roman Catholic) were entirely neglected. Robert Ellsberg of the very lefty Orbis Books, for instance, gave a paper on "Cardinal Bernardin and the Quest for Common Ground." So a dead cardinal, may he rest in peace, and a comatose project he sponsored, may it rest in peace, did make an appearance on Harvard's screen of religion and American culture. To think that parents beyond numbering flirt with bankruptcy so that their children can get what is called a Harvard education.

■ Jane Fonda sounds the tocsin calling patriots to action. "Most Americans don't know their tax money is being used for that, and most Americans don't want it," she declares. Ms. Fonda, we are given to understand, has a long record of being attuned to the values of most Americans. The current cause for her alarm is that Congress has appropriated $50 million per year to encourage sex education programs that promote abstinence until marriage. Ms. Fonda is not without support from disinterested patriots. She has teamed up with Durex Consumer Products, the world's largest marketer of condoms (Sheik, Ramses, and Avanti brands), to launch a nationwide "Truth for Youth" program. Says Ms. Fonda, "Abstinence until marriage is based on an unreal world that isn't out there." Not if the Fonda-Durex team has its way.

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■ He was called "Darwin's rottweiler." T. H. Huxley was an intellectual street fighter who translated the master's arguments into the vulgate of Victorian England. Adrian Desmond, a British writer, has produced a new biography of Huxley that is highly praised by James R. Kincaid, professor of English at the University of Southern California, in the *New York Times Book Review*. He can find nothing to criticize in Desmond's hagiography, but there is this: "One thing will probably strike American readers, even in the midst of their delight: Desmond will seem vastly to overstate the fullness of Huxley's victory, the triumph of secular agnosticism and scientific rationalism. Is our modern world Huxley's? I don't know how it is in Desmond's England, but the contemporary United States seems to me about as skeptical, scientific, and agnostic as a tenth-century tribe of frog worshipers. We need Huxley back again, debating Pat Robertson, the head of the Promise Keepers, and a worthy representative of the Church of Scientology, say John Travolta." Oh, for those Victorian days when we had the smugly established Church of England to kick around.

■ I am told it is an old French saying: "Coincidences are events in which God wishes to remain incognito." The following, from *National Right to Life News*, is no coincidence: "On October 10, 1997, at 3:50 P.M., the Office of the Press Secretary at the White House released a presidential proclamation designating October 12, 1997, as 'National Children's Day.' In the first paragraph of the presidential declaration, Bill Clinton states, 'With the birth of every child, the world becomes new again. Within each new infant lies enormous potential—potential for loving, for learning, and for making life better for others. But this potential must be nurtured. Just as seeds need fertile soil, warm sunshine, and gentle rain to grow, so do our children need a caring environment, the security of knowing they are loved, and the encouragement and opportunity to make the most of their God-given talents. There is no more urgent task before us, as a people and as a nation, than creating such an environment for America's children.' On October 10, 1997, at around 4:30 P.M.—less than an hour after issuing his Children's Day proclamation—Bill Clinton issued another proclamation: his veto of the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act."

■ "I am one person who is thoroughly enjoying the television program *Nothing Sacred,*" writes Mary Hazlett of Akron, Ohio, to the *National Catholic Reporter*. According to the latest ratings for the show (which may be canceled by the time this appears), even one person really matters. "*Nothing Sacred* appeals to me because the characters, like myself, are human beings. Flawed. Scared. Insecure. . . . Those of us who risk diving into our inner darkness journey through this loneliness and despair. . . . We struggle with the rich questions that have few answers, the very same universal questions and temptations of Jesus. . . . The characters in *Nothing Sacred* are the sort of people I need to accompany me on my journey. . . . In the struggle, they live authentic lives." Flawed? Scared? Insecure? Lonely? Despairing? Or smugly proud of being in the company of an elite who live authentic lives, just like Jesus?

■ Cynthia Ozick, writing in the *New Yorker*, is really upset, and with some reason. A new Broadway production of *The Diary of Anne Frank* reminds her of how the story has been twisted into a sweet little tale for adolescent girls, omitting the horror of Nazism and Anne's extermination. Ozick writes, "And because the end is missing, the story of Anne Frank in the fifty years since *The Diary of a Young Girl* was first published has been bowdlerized, distorted, transmuted, traduced, reduced; it has been infantilized, Americanized, homogenized, sentimentalized; falsified, kitschified, and, in fact blatantly and arrogantly denied." In fact, Ms. Ozick goes on in that vein for pages and pages in a magazine once noted for its stylish writing. Somebody needs to take away her thesaurus. Under the deluge of verbal similitude, however, she may have a point.

■ Our local paper had this big story on the dedication of the Roth Center for Jewish Life at Dartmouth College. Dartmouth president James O. Freedman declared, "We must confront the ghosts of the past." He noted with satisfaction that a legacy of "bigotry" had long since been repudiated. As an example of bigotry, he cited a 1945 statement by Ernest M. Hopkins, then president of Dartmouth: "Dartmouth is a Christian college founded for the Christianization of its students." That was hardly original with Mr. Hopkins. The school's charter, granted by George III, declared its purpose to be the "civilizing and Christianizing of the children of pagans, as well as in all liberal arts and sciences, and also of English youths, and any others." More than two hundred years later, a president of Dartmouth is called courageous for confessing the sins of his predecessors who supported the idea of a Christian college. One rather doubts that anyone at universities such as Yeshiva or Brandeis think it bigotry that they were established to be, in some significant sense, Jewish. It even seems likely that the Roth Center for Jewish Life will be mainly, if not exclusively, for Jewish students. One hopes the day will never come when that, too, will be deemed a ghost of the past that must be exorcised. Meanwhile, one wishes Dartmouth well in coping with the current crop of pagans

■ An astute reader points out that in Steven

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Spielberg's *Amistad,* former Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun, he of *Roe* infamy, makes a cameo appearance as Justice Joseph Story ruling in favor of the slaves. Blackmun as Justice Roger Taney in *Dred Scott* would seem to be more in character.

■ At the state capitol in Madison, Wisconsin, the confessing atheist organization, Freedom from Religion Foundation, for the second year in a row put up a sign next to the Christmas tree. "In this season of the Winter Solstice, may reason prevail. There are no gods, no devils, no angels, no heaven or hell. There is only our material world. Religion is but a myth and superstition that hardens hearts and enslaves minds." On the backside of the sign they put the admonition, "Thou shalt not steal." Sez who?

■ When the New Jersey senate overrode Gov. Christine Todd Whitman's veto of a bill banning partial-birth abortion, the story in the *Times* held a welcome change. In numerous past references to the subject, the paper routinely referred to "so-called" partial-birth abortion and invented technical-sounding gobbledygook to describe the surgery, claiming that it is the way it is described by "medical experts." This time the reporter frankly admitted, on the front page yet, that there is no accepted medical terminology to describe killing a baby who is in the process of being born. The editorial writers, however, apparently do not read their paper carefully and the next day an editorial titled "Abortion Retreat in New Jersey" was back to lamenting the ban on "so-called partial-birth abortions." The editorial praised Whitman for her veto, acknowledging that she thereby probably lost any chance at national Republican leadership and was barely reelected, but deplored her failure to fight harder for "women's reproductive freedom." "Regrettably," the editors note, "Mrs. Whitman chose not to lobby the Legislature to protect her veto. Her decision to leave the vote to each lawmaker's conscience opened the field for anti-abortion forces to exert pressure." There the people go again, trying to influence their representatives. Isn't it bad enough that Mrs. Whitman had to demean herself by standing for reelection and was almost defeated by the great unwashed? This democracy business is clearly getting out of hand. But the fact that New Jersey joins sixteen other states in banning the killing of babies while they are being born does not leave the editors without hope. "This latest product of the new abortion politics should not survive a serious review by the courts," they opine. Ah yes, the courts. Of course.

■ Janet Maslin of the *Times* calls it "A rare display of spiritual light on screen." It's Robert Duvall's *The Apostle,* and this time the Elmer Gantry line is turned on its head. Duvall's character, Sonny, is a deeply conflicted southern preacher who messes up big time but then begins anew in a Louisiana small town where he is redeemed by the gospel he preaches. Much to everyone's surprise, including Mr. Duvall's, the film is being touted as a strong contender for Academy Awards.

■ I encountered Father Thomas Reese, author of a useful manual on the internal workings of the Holy See called *Inside the Vatican,* one day as I was leaving the Synod for America with a friend. He was with other journalists at the gate where the Swiss guards only admitted members of the Synod. My friend could not resist observing, "But Tom, I thought you were *inside* the Vatican." Upon my return I read Fr. Reese's report on the November meeting of U.S. bishops in Washington, which includes this: "The pastoral message to parents of homosexuals, 'Always Our Children,' was defended by Bishop Thomas J. O'Brien of Phoenix, Ariz., who is chair of the Marriage and Family Life Committee. The committee's message received very positive coverage in the media but was attacked by reactionary and homophobic groups. Although the response of the bishops to the document was positive, some feared the message would be interpreted as a softening of the church's teaching against homosexual activity. In response one bishop noted that homosexual groups were unanimous in saying that the bishops' message was good 'as far as it went,' which indicated that these groups certainly had not misinterpreted the message." Well, Bishop O'Brien would defend it, wouldn't he? His committee wrote it. And are all those who have strongly criticized the statement—including Fr. John Harvey, founder of the homosexual assistance group called Courage and the distinguished philosopher John Finnis of Oxford and Notre Dame—fairly described as "reactionary and homophobic"? It possibly makes me a reactionary in Fr. Reese's book, but for some reason I do not share his sense of reassurance when a Church statement on sexual morality receives "very positive coverage in the media." Most curious, however, is Fr. Reese's apparent agreement with one bishop who is confident that Catholic teaching is not compromised by "All Our Children" because homosexual groups say it does not go all the way in saying what they think should be the Church's teaching on the subject.

■ My apologies. I thought I had noted earlier the death last September of Dr. Joseph Stanton, at age seventy-seven. Dr. Stanton was crippled by polio at age fifteen and spent much of his life in a wheelchair. He said it made him a better doctor, knowing that "when you have nothing curative to offer, continuing to care and care very deeply can be a very important thing for many patients." He was a pioneering hero of the pro-life movement and his extensive archives on the cause are now preserved by the Sisters of Life in their convent in the Bronx, New

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York. Dr. Joe's life was a declaration of faith-filled courage. It still is. *Requiescat in pace.*

■ As the old saying has it, lose a few, lose a few. If you're connected with something called the Quixote Center, you don't expect to win very often. On the other hand, as co-director of the center, Sister Maureen Fiedler, said, this time it seemed they were on to a winner. "We had all this marvelous polling data, which we had for decades, showing that three-quarters of U.S. Catholics want a married clergy, two-thirds want married priests, overwhelming percentages would like to return to the tradition of electing bishops, and so forth and so on," said Sister Maureen. Of course the data showed no such things, as the Quixotes were about to find out. What the data showed is that, on these and other questions, the overwhelming majority of Catholics would go along with whatever the Church decided. But, misreading the signs of the times, the Quixotes pulled out all the stops to get a million signatures of Catholic Americans on a "referendum petition" calling for the ordination of women, popular election of bishops, optional celibacy for priests, the embrace of gay rights, and a change of rules regarding divorced and married Catholics. The petition drive was to run from Pentecost 1996 to Pentecost 1997, and then was extended through the fall of 1997. Full-page advertisements were taken out in "progressive" publications, a national network of parish pushers was enlisted, all the paraphernalia of the putative wave of the future was recruited, and the campaign ended up with thirty-seven thousand signatures, which was 4 percent of the goal and near-zilch percent of the sixty million Catholics in the U.S. "We had organizing kits," says Sister Maureen, "We had grass roots efforts, we had mass mailings. In other words, we tried everything we possibly could. We really gave it everything we had." The bishops were not sympathetic to the effort, says Sister Maureen. She tells about walking down a chancery hall with an auxiliary bishop when the ordinary of the diocese appeared and the auxiliary shoved her into a closet in order not to be seen with her. "There's no way to describe the political structure of our church except to say that it is monarchical, it is certainly authoritarian, increasingly repressive, and it shows even a few signs, unfortunately, of efficiency in that regard," she observes. She did not mention the heartbreak of being the kind of person whom people shove in a closet in order to avoid being seen with in public. Quixotes are nothing if not quick learners, however. From the debacle of the referendum, Sister Maureen learned this: "We overestimated Catholic theological maturity."

■ Most of what appears in the *Tablet* (London) is predictably liberal, almost to the point of self-parody. But a good many people, also on this side of the drink, read it for its coverage of church news not reported elsewhere. Like other publications, however, it has to cope with slow news weeks from time to time. The lead item in "The Church in the World" section this time is headed, "Once again a bishop's appointment divides local church." Oh my. According to the Norwegian Catholic monthly, *St. Olav,* there is considerable unhappiness with the appointment of Father George Müller as bishop of the tiny territorial prefecture of Trondheim, which covers central Norway and has 2,285 Catholics in a population of 619,000. That's one Catholic per 271 inhabitants. Catholicism is not big in Norway. It is not clear why the people of Trondheim don't like their new bishop, but the report is that reservations were sent to Rome and "handed on all the way to the top." The question is portentously asked, "Which advisers has the Pope then listened to in connection with the appointment?" One expects that the editors would be shocked, yes shocked, to be told that the universal pastor of a billion Catholics possibly spent no more time than it takes to sign the document of appointment in naming the pastor of a local church as large as a small parish in many parts of the world. As I say, it was a slow news week. There was also happier news, however. "Salford welcomes its new bishop" is another item of the week. The new bishop of Salford, England, is Terence Brain and he said in his installation homily: "I pledge to encourage you, support you, enable you, so that together we choose cooperation and collaboration in our common calling to serve the people of God." Enabling people (are they disabled?) is all fine and dandy, but what happened to, for instance, empowering? One hopes the faithful of Salford will protest the discrimination against that and other equally vacuous clichés. Inclusivity in choosing cooperation and collaboration in our common calling requires no less. Never mind Trondheim; I want to know who advised the Pope in appointing the bishop of Salford.

■ As Edgar Bronfman of the World Jewish Congress goes from country to country and door to door demanding confessions and reparations for what people did or didn't do at the time of the Holocaust, he can skip America House over on West 56th Street. A long article in the Jesuit magazine *America* is given to nothing more that touting that "*America* stands in stark contrast to much of the Catholic and Protestant press in its coverage of these events." Sure enough, the article relates in numbing detail that the magazine, to its credit, spoke out repeatedly against Hitler and for the Jews. Had someone suggested otherwise? An additional oddity of the article is that it nowhere mentions the other publications to which *America* stands in such "stark contrast." Nonetheless, let the record show that *America* was right about Hitler. Congratulations, if not self-congratulations, are in order.

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■ Singin' them old third-way blues. For people who don't have a scorecard it must be explained that the new name for capitalism is neoliberalism. This is the usage among leftist intellectuals all over the southern hemisphere or what used to be called the Third World. And among their friends in the West who were so bitterly disappointed by the failure of real-world, existing socialism, a.k.a. communism. The vicissitudes of history, however, have not dissuaded them from their earnest search for a "third way" between socialism and capitalism, namely, socialism. Among Catholics of the left, the complaint is that the capitalist neoliberals have hijacked Catholic social teaching, with the help of a none-too-alert Pope who in the 1991 encyclical, *Centesimus Annus,* said the free economy is the way to go. "A theology of liberation is more needed today than ever—but a renewed liberation theology in a different form than previously," Father Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, Father General of the Society of Jesus, told a Swiss news agency. He and others have discovered that the global economy of neoliberalism has not benefited everyone equally. There are still poor people, he sadly notes. He says that the earlier liberation theology of the 1970s and '80s had become "exhausted." That is to say, Marxism was discredited by the very history to which it appealed for vindication. But that older liberation theology should not be forgotten, since it was "deeply rooted in the Gospel and real life of the People of God." Fr. Kolvenbach said that a French Jesuit, Fr. Jean-Yves Calvez, is "working on proposals for a new papal encyclical on problems of marginalization, unemployment, and social rejection." But the proposed new encyclical will not deal only with the problems being experienced by the Jesuits. It will also address what is described as the more general crisis of society. The older liberation theology was sharply criticized by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1984 and 1986. Nothing daunted, Fr. Kolvenbach says the third way is now being set to a new tune and "is undoubtedly needed in developed countries too, although not in any sense a copy of the Latin American theology." He does not say whether the Pope has been informed about the new encyclical that is in the works. In preparing new encyclicals, the Jesuits operate on what the intelligence community calls the NTK ("need to know") principle. In the old days—back when "jesuitical" meant crafty—they didn't even explain their secrets to the news media.

■ Homer nods. In *Modern Times* and many other writings, Paul Johnson has railed convincingly against the pretensions of the political class that they have either authority or competence to transform the world. But in the last year or more his column in the *Spectator* reflects his being smitten by New Labor's Tony Blair, which has him nodding in blissful dreams of politicians who "can make a difference." Here is a column in which he urges Blair to make family policy the centerpiece of his program. "What a splendid title to lasting fame Blair could earn if he went down in history as the prime minister who restored the British family to health and strength," writes Johnson. A political leader can restore a nation's families to health and strength? Paul Johnson would be well advised to go back and read Paul Johnson.

■ During the recent Synod of Bishops in Rome, according to the *Tablet,* an elderly parishioner of a parish in Sussex complained that her hearing aid had been on the blink. After Mass she inquired of a friend, "I know they asked us to pray for the bishops who sinned in Rome, but what did they do?"

■ We are pleased, I mean really pleased, to announce that Daniel P. Moloney has joined us as Associate Editor. He succeeds J. Bottum, who, after a brief but brilliant career with us, decided to retire to the Potomac. Mr. Moloney earned his B.A. at Yale, where he was senior editor of the *Yale Free Press,* and his M.A. in philosophy at Notre Dame, where he has completed all but the writing of the thesis for his Ph.D. His field is medieval logic and epistemology, and his thesis is on Anselm's use of analogy. He is not limited to such pressingly relevant questions, however. He also maintains a lively interest in ethics, politics, jurisprudence, and the media, and was founding editor of *Right Reason,* the independent student publication at Notre Dame. He plans to finish writing the doctoral thesis in, as it were, his spare time. And this you will be pleased to know: Once again we received a big bundle of applications from extremely well qualified candidates. I wish we had several positions to fill, but we don't. The heartening lesson to be drawn is that there are an awful lot of capable young people out there who have survived the calamities of what we persist in calling higher education. Daniel P. Moloney, for example, from and about whom I expect you will be hearing much more.

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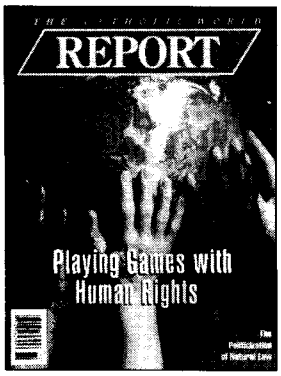

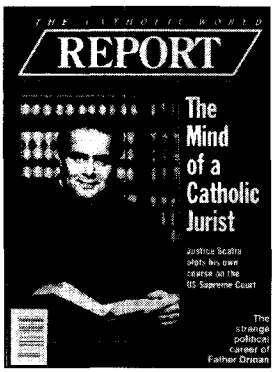

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